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MOSCOW AND THE WAR

THE centre of the stage is no longer London or Berlin, but Moscow. Stalin's intentions are a matter of dispute, but the immediate result of the advance of the Soviet troops has been greatly to increase the area of the U.S.S.R. and to give Stalin an influence over Nazi Germany unequalled by any other Power. The whole situation is changed when Nazi and Soviet troops fraternise over the unhappy corpse of Poland—even though the friendship of their leaders may be dubious. There is naturally much bewilderment in the British public. We are not the only newspaper to be inundated with correspondence, arguing mainly that the U.S.S.R. is effectively checking German aggression in the East, that the old Poland cannot in any circumstances be restored, and asking for what causes Britain and France are now fighting. There is a revulsion in every country, including Germany, against war—for who knows what? Our leading article, for instance, discussed the vital question of British intentions in India, where Congress has made clear that its attitude is conditional on Indian freedom. A critical moment is at hand; until we know the outcome of the negotiations in Moscow, no clear answer can be given about our future policy. One demand that should be pressed from all quarters is for the speedy dispatch of a British Minister of high rank—Mr. Eden has been suggested—to Moscow. This is still primarily a war of manoeuvre in terms of diplomacy and trade; Germany has waged this kind of war against the world for the last three years. Moscow has found a ruthless but effective reply to Hitler. The policy of Britain and France cannot be unaffected by Moscow's attitude. To-day, they cannot be sure what it is. The first task is to find out, and in the meantime to maintain a steady front in the West, while Mr. Churchill is establishing our command of the seas. Both sides know that no rapid break-through on the fortified lines is likely to succeed without the loss of millions of lives. If there is to be any attacking on the Western Front, let it come from Hitler—*que messieurs les assassains commencent*.

Hitler went to war to make himself the master of Eastern as well as Central Europe. This plan has miscarried. He has in fact made Stalin dictator over a vast territory that stretches from the right bank of the Vistula to Vladivostock. So long as he must fight Britain and France in the West, Stalin can blackmail him indefinitely. The first use that the Russians made of their advantage was to enforce a partition of Poland along a line very much further to the west than had been contemplated. It includes Praga, the eastern suburb of Warsaw, Lemberg (Lwow), the capital

of the Polish Ukraine, together with the Galician oilfield. Had the Russians stopped, as the Germans seem to have expected, at the Curzon Line, they would have acquired a population mainly White Russian, Ukrainian and Jewish by race. They will now acquire in this additional zone a mainly Polish population. The first result will be to reduce to the most modest dimensions any puppet Polish State that the Germans can now erect as a buffer between themselves and the Russians. More significant still, the latter will acquire common frontiers both with Slovakia and Hungary. Finally, they bestride one of the roads by which the Germans could reach Rumania. At one stroke, by this partition, backed by a fresh army, they have made themselves masters of the Balkan Peninsula. The Germans strive to conceal their chagrin by suggesting that this is not a final partition, but merely a provisional line of demarcation between the zones occupied by the two armies. This explanation finds no echo in Moscow, and the Russians are introducing their own institutions (including half a million portraits of Stalin) and dispossessing Polish landowners as they advance. These are not the proceedings of a temporary caretaker.

Von Ribbentrop's Pilgrimage

The sudden flight of Herr von Ribbentrop to Moscow is supposed to have as one of its motives the intention to remonstrate with the Russians over their acquisitive designs in Poland. If so, he may have flown too late, for Moscow after securing its centre in Poland is now engaged in consolidating its two wings round the Black Sea and the Baltic. If these measures succeed, they must cut off Germany still more absolutely from the East. Another pilgrim to the new metropolis of the East had preceded Herr von Ribbentrop. The Turkish Foreign Minister, M. Sarajoglu, is doubtless in Moscow to discuss all the implications of the alliance with the Western Powers which his country had almost completed, but had not yet signed. If Russia has designs on Bessarabia, the Turks dare not oblige us by underwriting the integrity of its owner, Rumania. Russia may wish to create under her own leadership a league of neutrals round the Black Sea. For that purpose Turkey would be asked to keep the Straits closed in Germany's interest. So Herr von Ribbentrop must pay his court to the red emperor of the East. We doubt whether he will remonstrate very hotly over Russia's gains in Poland.

Russia's Baltic Flank

Russia is simultaneously engaged in operations that seem designed to secure her northern flank, the Baltic. The first object of her attentions is Esthonia. The Foreign Minister of that little country, M. Selter, flew to Moscow to conclude (so it is said) a trade agreement. After a stay of two hours he flew precipitately back again. He has since returned, but in the interval, General Laidoner, the commander of his country's little army, has exhorted it to prepare its mind to defend Esthonian independence in the last ditch. It is stated and also denied that Russian troops are massed upon this frontier. The explanation of the interest which Moscow now takes in Esthonia is that sundry happenings in which submarines were concerned are said to have occurred in Esthonian waters. A Polish submarine took refuge in Tallin, was there interned, but contrived to escape. Thereafter, a submarine of unknown nationality is said to have sunk a Russian ship. From these events Moscow draws the far from inevitable inference that Esthonia has provided on her coasts a base for hostile submarines. Hence her interest in Esthonian independence. It is not so sudden as might be supposed. British diplomatists were made aware of it during the negotiations over indirect aggression that ended in August. At that time no submarines were active. Their subsequent appearance will tend to confirm the growing belief in M. Stalin's powers of foresight.

The Budget

Sir John Simon's budget has pleased some people, given many a shock, and surprised most. Hardly anyone expected that he would raise the standard rate of income tax to as much as 7*s.* 6*d.*, even with the qualification that the immediate rise will stop at 7*s.* In relation to this startling increase, the very moderate increases in death duties and surtax look markedly unfair to the smaller direct taxpayers. As for indirect taxation, the Chancellor has limited himself to the traditional victims—beer, wine, spirits, tobacco and sugar. His aim, in all this, is twofold—to meet out of taxation as high a proportion of war-costs as he can, and to restrict private expenditure. It is, however, clearly fantastic to suppose that the taxpayers, mulcted as they will now be, can save and lend to the Government more than a small fraction of the balance which will have to be raised; and for what cannot be found in this way there is no source except inflation. Accordingly, despite the new taxes, prices are bound to rise, though less sharply than they would have risen if Sir John had taxed less heavily. On the whole, we have no quarrel with his decision to be drastic, though much with the proposed distribution of the burden. It is a great mistake to touch the allowances for children; and the provisions in aid of those whose incomes have fallen owing to the war appear to be inadequate—all this apart from the regressive effect of the new taxation as a whole. Moreover, a tax of 60 per cent. on war profits, in the light of experience in the last war, will mostly be passed on to the buyers—largely to the Government itself—unless control over prices and contracts is made very much more stringent than it was last time.

The U-Boats

Mr. Churchill's speech about the measures taken to deal with the submarine campaign was a model of what such speeches should be. Its style was admirable: it was entirely devoid of rhetoric; and it conveyed a great deal of information. Confirming, as a minimum estimate, the Prime Minister's statement about the number of U-boats already sunk, it gave exact figures about the amounts of British tonnage destroyed week by week since the outbreak of war, and measured these losses against enemy tonnage captured and converted to British use. Mr. Churchill's figures of recent losses—only 9,000 tons in the past six days, as against 65,000 tons in the first week, 46,000 in the second, and 21,000 in the third—were distinctly reassuring; and his information about the development of the convoy system and the arming of our merchant fleet against submarine and air attack was very welcome. Losses, he said, were bound to go on; but he spoke with conviction when he declared that the situation was well in

hand. We cannot hope to offset further losses by captures of enemy vessels though we can go on seizing contraband cargoes; and the seriousness of attack from the air and from surface craft have still to be measured. But, speaking out of his experience as First Lord at a critical period of the last war, he was able to give good grounds for his optimism. The speech has certainly done a good deal to strengthen his position in Parliament and in the country.

Change of Plan, or Incompetence?

The methods adopted by the Government in requisitioning buildings for emergency purposes have provoked the strongest protests from the hotel proprietors; but many other sections of the public have also good ground for complaint. In the case of hotels, it seems to have been quite usual for guests, staffs and furniture to be flung on the street at twenty-four hours' notice; so that it was impossible for any arrangements to be made either for alternative accommodation or for finding alternative jobs for the workers who had to be discharged. Similarly, Universities and Colleges which believed that they had made approved arrangements for alternative accommodation have found the premises they had contracted to occupy snatched from them and their students left without any facilities for continuing their work. Some confusion is doubtless unavoidable at the present stage; but plans both for evacuation and for the expansion of the armed forces were supposed to have been made months ahead, and in the case of the Universities careful plans had been drawn up in conjunction with the Government long before the outbreak of war. Does what has been happening indicate a last-hour change of plans, or merely incompetence and inconsiderateness on the part of the military and civil departments responsible? As there appears to have been less rather than more evacuation than was intended, the second explanation seems, *prima facie*, the more likely.

The Trade Unions and the Control of Supply

The Trade Unions are now pressing the Government on two fronts for an effective share in the wartime organisation of industry. They want, on the one hand, proper arrangements for consultation about all questions of dilution or substitution of labour, and other workshop changes due to the emergency organisation of industry, such as the suspension of Factory Act provisions. For these purposes, they want joint machinery set up for each important industrial group, and an undertaking that the Government will make full use of this machinery; and they want also a co-ordinating body, of an advisory character, to discuss the general problems which arise. But the Trade Union requirements are not limited to a voice in the settling of "labour questions," to which the big employers would probably wish their participation to be confined. They are claiming, in addition, that they ought to be given an important place in the determination of general economic policy, and that the Government has no right to settle such matters over their heads in collaboration with the employers. This wider claim is naturally mixed up with the organisation of the Ministry of Supply; but it arises also in relation to almost every one of the various "controls" regulating any branch of industry or transport. It is the same claim to a share in the "control of industry" as was made by the Trade Unions with increasing intensity during the last war; and the Government should heed it before rising prices and indignation about profiteering reach danger point.

Registration, Rationing and Prices

National Registration Day has not troubled the householder with many difficult questions; for the form which he was required to fill up was a relatively simple affair. But it has left a good many people wondering just where they stand. The many thousands who were away from their regular homes on registration day are left wondering how they are to be arranged for under the rationing schemes for which the register is to prepare the way. Householders who had temporarily depleted households on registration day are wondering how they will get ration books for those who were absent; and persons whose jobs compel them to spend part of the week in one place and part in another (as distinct from commercial travellers and regular nomads, whose needs have been specially provided for) are wondering how rationing will work in their case. As soon as these difficulties have been cleared up, it is plainly desirable for rationing to begin promptly, in order, as Mr. Alexander said in the House of Commons on Tuesday, to prevent the invidious practice of retailers rationing their own customers how they please. A considerable shortage of butter, he suggested, was certain to occur at once in many areas unless the available supplies were rightly distributed under a general rationing scheme. Mr. Alexander also pointed to serious dislocation in the supply of meat, and drew attention to the fact that wholesale meat prices had risen by 15 per cent. on the average since August 25th, whereas retailers were expected to go on selling at the prices then in force. Here is yet another instance of the patchy profiteering which is involved in the lop-sided working of the existing "controls."

IMPORTANT

Most readers are aware that newspapers are normally sold to newsagents "on sale or return," which means that the newsagent may obtain credit from the publishers for unsold copies returned.

War restrictions will compel the newspaper proprietors to suspend this arrangement very shortly and newsagents will then only order their actual needs, with the result that any reader who does not place a definite order for a paper may find it difficult if not impossible to obtain a copy.

Distribution is further complicated at the moment by the large number of changes of address and the consequent shifting of demand; also we are experiencing a substantially increased demand for this journal, recent issues having "sold out" in many places by Monday.

You are asked, therefore, to instruct your newsagent forthwith to reserve or deliver a copy of this paper each week, or you may take out a postal subscription either through a newsagent or direct from this office. A yearly subscription costs 30*s*., half yearly 15*s*., quarterly 7*s*. 6*d*., and these terms not only include postage to any address in the world, but allow you to change the address to which the paper is posted as often as is necessary. Such notification of change of address, in the case of a direct postal subscription, should reach 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1., not later than Wednesday morning, first post, for the following Saturday's issue.

All MSS. and letters should be addressed to the Editor, at 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.
POSTAGE on this issue is: Inland, 1d.; Foreign, 1d.; Canada, 1d.

INDIA THE TEST-QUESTION

A CONSIDERABLE part of the earth's surface has been "blacked out" since war obscured our windows. There lie in these dim regions problems that may confront us, if we ignore them, with a painful surprise. India has sunk below the surface like a torpedoed ship. Some fragments of news have reached us, indeed, which sedulously ignore the main point. Mr. Gandhi has addressed some words of sympathy to the Poles. The Princes have done what is customary in times of crisis: they have offered the Empire their troops and in some cases their personal services. But Mr. Gandhi was far from speaking his whole mind to the Poles. As for the Princes, most of us know better than to mistake their voice for that of the Indian people, with which, indeed, they are at feud. What, in the silence and the darkness, is it thinking? Unless we strain our ears to listen, we may suffer an unpleasant awakening.

It has, in fact, spoken very plainly through the organisation that won a big majority when it last went to the polls in its several provinces. Over the greater part of British India the Congress is in office. In an able and persuasive document its working Committee has set out its views. Up to a point they are reassuring. Indians share the opinions of all civilised men who think freely about this crisis. They are opposed to the whole spirit of Fascism: they see in the Nazi variety only "an intensification of the imperialism against which they have always struggled": they condemn its aggression against Poland. They feel themselves in sympathy with the peoples of the West, and do not doubt that they are "genuinely moved by the ideals of saving democracy and freedom." Their governments, however, inspire a feeling of distrust, and the Congress recalls the record of our own in its dealings with previous victims of aggression, nor can it forget the bitter fruit of the last war. In the present emergency the British Government has deliberately ignored Indian opinion, and without its consent declared India a belligerent country, promulgated Emergency Ordinances, passed the India Act Amending Bill and other vital measures circumscribing and limiting the powers and activities of Provincial Governments. Smarting under this experience, the Congress presents to us its sharply defined alternatives.

If the present war is for defending the *status quo*, Imperialist possessions, colonies and vested interests, then India can have nothing to do with it. If the issue, however, is democracy and a new world order, then India is intensely interested.

The test for Indians is simple. "Freedom," as they see it, is "indivisible," and "India is the crux of the problem as she is the outstanding example of modern imperialism." There follows the logical challenge:

If Britain fights for democracy then she must necessarily end imperialism, and establish full democracy in India. The manifesto ends with a demand that we shall declare our "war-aims regarding democracy and imperialism and the establishment of a new world order and *how these aims will be applied to India now*."

This document, by some unfortunate accident, has failed to reach the daily press. It contains no threat, but it is none the less a warning that we shall disregard at our peril. By decisions taken at Whitehall we have thrust India into this war and made her a belligerent. She informs us now that her will is her own: she is not yet our ally: we have still to win her. If we take the appropriate steps, she will fling herself into this war to establish the new democratic world order: if not——. She leaves us to guess the alternative. Memory may go some way to supply it. The older generation can recall what happened in the last war. With a chivalry that disdained to take advantage of our difficulties, Indians rallied to our flag, not the Princes alone, but the nation. Mr. Gandhi forgot his pacifism and recruited for us, and Indians braved the cold of Flanders and the heat of Mesopotamia. There came by way of response a generous if vague promise of freedom from the King-Emperor. After long delays it was embodied in the timid, tentative Montagu-Chelmsford reforms, but hard on these came repression, with the Rowlatt Act which fettered the Indian press as never before. An Afghan war shook us on the frontier and compelled us to realise that we had wholly lost the impulse of loyalty and hope that had flamed up in 1914. The Punjab was on the verge of open revolt and we met it with coercion that reached its climax in the panic-cruelty of Amritsar. Moslems, outraged by the War Settlement, joined hands with Hindoos, and we had to face the first amateur effort at civil disobedience.

On this occasion we have been warned betimes. We shall recollect, if we are wise, that the Indian nation is incomparably more mature than it was a quarter of a century ago, and its Congress movement very much stronger. It is now entrenched as the government of most of the provinces. It is no longer an irresponsible Opposition, but a power that rightly feels it has a claim to be consulted. When the danger of war confronted us our rulers perpetrated one of the capital mistakes in our imperial history. They assumed, what they could not take for granted in the case of the Dominions, that we could without their assent drag Indians as automata after us into this war. It prepared them for the ordeal by an Amending Act that restricted and threatened, during the period of emergency, such precarious liberties as they possess. So their Congress replied by a first significant act of non-co-operation: it withdrew its members from the Legislative Assembly. In the face of the world we have now to answer its question. With India as the test, is this a war for democratic freedom, or for empire and the *status quo*?

Britain cannot blankly reject the demands of Congress nor delay to answer. It is equally clear that mere verbal promises would be unavailing. Fortunately the unacceptable scheme of Federation has been indefinitely postponed. It is out of the question that we should attempt, amid a war in which our existence is at stake, to amend it or reconstruct it. The drafting of constitutions will have to wait for the return of peace. What, then, can we do at once?

The first step is obvious. Among our war-aims, after consulting the recognised leaders of the Indian people we must include, in words acceptable to them, an undertaking to establish their democratic freedom as a nation that controls its own destinies. This must carry with it a pledge to admit them, as we shall admit our allies and the Dominions, as equal partners in the building at the settlement of the new world-order. But all this would be unavailing if in the meanwhile we governed India as before, with the inevitable aggravation of wartime

restrictions, imposed without her consent or participation. It is both possible and easy, without any constitutional changes whatever, to realise responsible self-government at the centre at once. It is not necessary to bind the Viceroy to bow to the opinion of India's elected representatives: in fact let him do so. It is not necessary to define the status of India's responsible Ministers: in fact it would suffice to appoint some of them to the Viceroy's Council: when appointed, let him accept their advice. It might be advisable to dissolve the present Assembly and to conduct new elections under the existing provincial franchise, which is relatively democratic. The briefest Amending Act would avail for that purpose. But if we are brave enough in our sincerity to face such an act of courage and faith as this, let us not spoil it by a timid choice of second-rate men. There is one man and only one who could lead India in the new path. Second only to Mr. Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru enjoys her trust and respect. In character and intellect he is fitted to take his place in the first rank of statesmen. He is, moreover, a man whose writings exhibit a mind with a wide international outlook. The Congress has, moreover, named him as its leader in this emergency. By making him Premier in fact if not in name, we should not merely win India: we should startle the civilised world into a belief in our sincerity.

India, indeed, is the crux. We are on our trial before the whole civilised world. From Washington to Moscow, every neutral onlooker is asking the question that Indians have posed: is this a war for the imperial *status quo* or for a new democratic world-order? The same question shapes itself in the mind of the German people. Not to-day, but some months or years hence, the answer it frames on our record may decide the issue of this war. If we dare give India liberty we shall win the leadership of all free peoples. But if we must meet a rebel India with coercion, will anyone in Europe or America mistake us for the champions of democracy?

MURDER IN HIGH PLACES

AT first thought, one might have supposed that a book dealing with the plight of one of the most utterly depressed areas in Great Britain* would have seemed out of date, appearing, as it does, at a time when the problem of the depressed areas has been lost to sight amid the hustle of wartime reorganisation. But Miss Wilkinson's account of Jarrow-on-Tyne—" the town that was murdered," as she rightly calls it—is very far from seeming out of date. For the story that she has to tell is both very closely related to our present problems of wartime armament and supply and rich in warnings of the dangers which beset us if the great profit-making combines are to be allowed to dominate public policy in war, as they have dominated it in peace and war-preparation.

Quite rightly, Miss Wilkinson puts in the centre of her picture two episodes—the dismantling of Palmers' Shipyard under the auspices of National Shipbuilders' Security, Ltd., and the struggle to prevent an integrated modern steel plant from being established on the derelict site—a struggle in which a second great combine, the Iron and Steel Federation, played the principal part. These two episodes are so revealing, and Miss Wilkinson tells the history of them so well, angrily but without exaggeration or rhetoric, that I hope her book will have a real influence in putting public opinion more on its guard against the restrictive machinations of a British capitalism no longer expansive and enterprising, but determined to maintain profits in a shrinking market by every possible device at the expense of the workers and the public.

Broadly, the story of Palmers' Shipyard is distressingly simple. During the great slump in British shipbuilding, the leading firms in the industry got together and determined to seek a solution of the problem of price-cutting competition by buying up as many shipyards as possible and putting them out of action permanently. It dismantled them and re-sold the sites subject to the condition that no new shipyards should be established on them. The selected yards were bought at more than scrap prices, in order to induce sales; and the finance was provided through a syndicate headed by the Bank of England and the joint stock banks, the money being finally recoverable through a percentage on the prices charged to customers for new vessels. This policy, carried through with full support from the Government and the banks, resulted in permanently scaling down British shipyard capacity by nearly one-third, and virtually prevented the setting-up of any new shipyards, for want of suitable sites. It therefore reacts very dangerously on British capacity to build new tonnage rapidly in order to deal with the submarine campaign.

Moreover, in selecting shipyards to be destroyed, the combine was mainly influenced, not by considerations of technical efficiency, but by the financial difficulties into which the owning companies had fallen. Palmers' Shipyard was admittedly one of the most efficient in Great Britain; but it was tied financially to a derelict steelworks, so that it was unable to meet its standing charges at the bottom of the depression. It was therefore scrapped; and the town of Jarrow—a one-industry town almost entirely dependent on it for the means of life—was murdered with it.

That is the first part of the story. The second begins with the attempt of Mr. Salt to buy the empty site for the erection of a big new integrated steelworks equipped with the most modern plant. This project at once aroused the fiercest antagonism among the leaders of the Iron and Steel Federation, and especially among the steel firms on the North-East Coast, who saw that the new works would be able to undersell their older, obsolescent plants, and were therefore determined to strangle the project at birth. They could not, of course, directly prohibit Mr. Salt from building the proposed works; but they could, with the aid of the Bank of England and the other banks interested in the fortunes of the existing works, make it very difficult for him to raise the money. They could also, armed with the extensive powers conferred on the Iron and Steel Federation by the Government and through its connections with the Continental Steel Cartel, put most formidable obstacles in the way of his finding markets for his products. When they were compelled to pretend that they were not opposing the new works, for fear of public opinion, they proposed terms which would have meant in effect that Mr. Salt's company would have been compelled to pay into a pool, to be divided among his rivals, a fine practically equal to the expected superior efficiency of the new establishment.

This killed the big Jarrow steelworks project; and to-day the fact that it was killed means that we are proportionately unable rapidly to expand our output of steel in order to meet the needs of war. This is not the place to discuss the largely similar methods used in fighting the Richard Thomas steel plans at Ebbw Vale—a story with a somewhat different ending, since the works there did get built—but equally illustrative, as readers of this journal know, of the restrictive practices of British capitalism in the heavy industries. The much smaller steelworks which Jarrow was ultimately allowed to have can be, as Miss Wilkinson points out, no substitute at all for the much more ambitious plan deliberately killed by the rival steelmasters.

These two narratives account for only a section—albeit the key section—of Miss Wilkinson's most interesting book. She relates the earlier as well as the later history of Jarrow as an industrial town, including the story of Jarrow coal-mining

* The Town that was Murdered: the Life Story of Jarrow. By ELLEN WILKINSON, M.P. *Gollancz.* 7*s.* 6*d.* Left Book Club Members' edition, 2*s.* 6*d.*

and of the building up of the shipyard and its auxiliary enterprises by Charles Mark Palmer in the second half of the nineteenth century. She tells of the utter disregard of social conditions and amenities which is the reverse side of this romance of Victorian industrial enterprise. Then there is all the story of Jarrow's social history since the collapse of the shipyard—of the Means Test, the appalling difficulties of local government in a town where a penny rate produces about £400 (whereas in Holborn with much the same population it produces £6,800 and in Bedford £1,500), the successful organisation of the famous Jarrow hunger march in 1934, the meagre results of the attempts of Sir John Jarvis and others to promote the establishment of smaller new industries, and so on. The book would be well worth reading for these sections; but what stands out most of all in it is the crushing indictment of the methods of trustified capitalism in twentieth-century Great Britain, under Governments which encourage its restrictive policies, abetted by bankers who reinforce industrial with financial monopoly at the expense of the public.

That the effect of these methods has been to weaken Great Britain for war as well as for peace is abundantly clear. For nineteenth-century capitalism it could at any rate be said that, however ruthless it might be about the social consequences of its actions, it did stimulate production and apply new technical inventions with all the speed it could. But this newer capitalism is the enemy of technical progress. Accepting the limitation of markets, it sets out to entrench itself and its obsolescent methods and equipment—to create scarcity, and out of scarcity to maintain profits in the interests of a narrow oligarchy of big industrialists and financiers. The best lesson we can learn from Miss Wilkinson's book is what we have to expect if, under pretext of wartime State control, we hand over the powers of public regulation to the very oligarchs who see in higher production the supreme threat to their continued tenure of power. Yet that is what is very likely to happen under our present Government, unless the Opposition in and out of Parliament is very vigilant in detecting and very courageous in exposing the abuses of "control," however cleverly the oligarchs may cover up their doings under the cloak of "military secrecy" and the masquerade of "public service."

A LONDON DIARY

The 999 of the Ministry of Information has become the best war joke. Note the relish with which this joke is embellished by the *Daily Express* and *Evening Standard* and the restraint of the criticism in the *Daily Telegraph*. The fact that Lord Beaverbrook was Minister of Information in the last war and that Lord Camrose has been called in to help clear up the mess at the Ministry and knows from inside the size of the problem that has to be tackled, may not be wholly irrelevant. The censorship has been absurd; the releases of news cancelled and then released again and cancelled again are exasperating. The press is freeing itself and we may soon get censorship confined to its proper military function. About the rest of this department the trouble is that routine civil servants too often occupy key positions, and that even when experts have been brought in to do special jobs they find themselves hampered at every point by a bureaucrat who knows how to write memoranda, but who may know nothing of advertising technique or the art of influencing public opinion. Three weeks is in any case far too short a time for many of the jobs undertaken by the Ministry to have shown results. Some clearance is certainly wanted, as the *Times* suggests, but if the axe is foolishly used all the wrong people may be turned out and our state be even worse than it is now. The Ministry has frequently been absurd, but much of the attack on it is due to the desire in influential quarters to find a whipping boy to divert attention from more serious scandals. The facts about the Ministry of Supply, for instance, are too little known to be a subject of easy comment.

Judging by a remarkable talk at 6.15 last Tuesday Sir John Anderson seems at last to have realised the inadequacy of his shelter-policy. In this talk householders in dangerous areas, who have neither an Anderson shelter nor a garden, were advised to choose one room and protect the windows against splinters to a level of *at least* six feet above floor level. Methods suggested were sandbagging, the use of boxes full of earth, or boarding up the window outside and in, and filling in the space between the boards with rubble. What the landlord would say, or what the increase of gas or electricity consumption would be in a room thus permanently darkened was not mentioned. Nor was it clear whether Sir John seriously imagines that people will take this drastic advice without infinitely stronger pressure than a brief broadcast talk. The important fact which emerges is that once again Government policy has wobbled, and that the obedient householders who had stuck cellulose on their windows and putty round the frames must start all over again and make one room uninhabitable. It is probably true that anyone who takes Sir John's advice will make themselves a little safer. But it is also certain that few will actually do so and that the net result of the new instructions will be an *alibi* for Sir John Anderson after the first air raid. Is not the conclusion irresistible that if the Government really rates the risks so high it should provide real shelter accommodation?

* * *

Writing for this journal from the U.S.A. on May 27th Mr. G. E. R. Gedye quoted a "very authoritative" United States source as having declared:

> We have definite evidence in this country that Goebbels, Göring, Ribbentrop, and a number of other Nazi leaders are busily—and secretly—building up personal fortunes abroad. About the only prominent leader concerning whom we have no definite evidence is Adolf Hitler himself. But the evidence we do have is convincing enough for us that the Nazi Party is not preparing to die in the last ditch.

Details of the fortunes of the leading Nazis abroad have now been published. But about Hitler himself all we know now is that he is the head of the *Eher Verlag*—which publishes *Mein Kampf*—in itself an immensely profitable business, since its sale, partly compulsory, amounts to millions. *Eher Verlag* also produces the *Voelkischer Beobachter* and many other official Nazi publications. A correspondent, commenting on this, tells me of an interesting recent experience. A few months ago he ordered a book in German from the *Eher Verlag*. After ordering the book, he was asked to pay its cost into the firm's account at the London Office of a Continental bank attached to a neutral country As Germany is so seriously in need of foreign currency, this request was certainly surprising. My correspondent asks whether this means that Hitler, through the *Eher* company, is building up a "nest-egg" in London.

* * *

How big have the recent disturbances in Czechoslovakia really been? Bigger than German propaganda admits, of course; and everyone who knows the Czechs and has been aware of the increasing robbery and tyranny they have been living under expected some considerable rising soon after the beginning of the war. Certainly the Nazis expected it; they had substantially reinforced their garrisons in Prague and elsewhere. Indeed they probably welcomed a premature revolt; it was easier to crush it before entering upon a more difficult stage of the war. Probably the Czechs expected that the war would have begun more violently in the West. As things were, one cannot help regretting that they moved too soon and hoping that, for some time to come, at any rate, Dr. Beneš' countrymen will interpret in the subtler sense, in which it was doubtless intended, his declaration, broadcast to them by wireless on September 19, that "*the world is expecting that, day after day, you will deal hard blows at your enemy.*" The Czechs have immense courage; they also have immense patience and they will need both—for the moment they need the latter even more than the former.

The regular political Parties have declared for a truce in bye-elections, but I hear that Arthur Woodburn, the Scottish Secretary of the Labour movement, will have to fight for his seat in the little Scottish county of Clackmannan. Andrew Stuart, a Glasgow Socialist and Assistant Editor of *Peace News*, is standing as a "stop the war" candidate. The bye-election was caused by the death of Mr. MacNeill Weir, who wrote the bitter biography of Ramsay MacDonald. It will be an interesting test of Scottish opinion.

* * *

One of the difficult problems which deeply affects the whole public is the mass of legislation which has lately been passed, and never properly explained to the public. Millions of family lives have been upset by the war and the dislocation of business it has caused. These families are bothered about Rent and Mortgages, Hire-Purchase, the U.A.B. and a host of other problems. They know very precisely that they are in trouble. There is the terrible weight of black-coated unemployment, the uncertainty of young men with nothing to do while they wait to be called up; and when you add to these, evacuation, the black-out, and the sudden rise in prices, you begin to realise why the common man is often dazed. What he needs more than anything else is a little help about his own private affairs. I know that Enquiry Bureaus are being established; some lawyers, with journalistic experience, should write a pamphlet on wartime legislation and the man in the street. Can't the B.B.C. lend a hand with ten-minute talks on these topics? Everyone is so busy on the war abroad that we tend to forget that for the common people it is not Britain's war-aims, but their war-life which really matters.

* * *

One of the ominous, if smaller, points about the Stalin-Hitler agreement is that nothing seems to have been done for any of the Communists in German concentration camps. For years the Labour movement everywhere has made "release Thaelmann" a symbol. Stalin, one feels, could have procured his release and that of scores of other persecuted people, by a lift of the finger. There was a rumour at first that Thaelmann was released, but this seems to be unfounded. I am still completely open-minded about Stalin's intentions. Many strange things have to be done in politics for many causes, but I cannot feel as confident as some of my correspondents do that Stalin is still helping the workers of the world to throw off their chains. We shall see.

* * *

Talking of people in concentration camps, I see that Otto Wels, the German Social-Democrat, has just died in an internment camp in France. Many life-long Socialists and anti-Nazis are interned in France. Many of them could be safely and usefully employed by the French Government in the war against the Nazis. The British authorities have been sensible about this: doubtful refugees are carefully watched, as they must be, but only the wrong 'uns are kept under lock and key. Use is being found for talent among the refugees. Cannot the French be persuaded to follow the British example in this matter?

* * *

In general I think the spirit of co-operation in the country has been good and much of the new unemployment is unavoidable and temporary. But war takes some very patriotic people in strange ways. We have on first-hand authority the case of a titled lady who celebrated its outbreak by dismissing all her estate employees of military age—to the number, we understand, of twenty-eight, if not more. The consequence was that these men were mostly left hanging about in the neighbourhood with nothing to do. Luckily for one of them, a highly skilled stableman, one of the noble lady's pedigree mares chose the occasion to give birth to a foal—with complications; and this 'particular member of the unemployed consequently got his job back. The others, we believe, are still waiting for the Government or some other employer to demand their services. In the same neighbourhood are a number of small factories producing exclusively for the domestic market. They too have turned off their hands, or many of them—with much better excuse than the noble lady.

* * *

A correspondent sends me another curious item of news from a country district. A certain great man, an army officer and well-known diehard Conservative, recently decided to close the ancestral mansion and to live in one of the smaller lodges on his estate. Just prior to the outbreak of war, cupboards, drawers and lumber rooms were given a clear out and much "rubbish" thrown away or burned. The work would appear to have been carried out with more zeal than care, since among the articles indiscriminately dumped for public inspection were some hundreds of British United Fascist badges, still wrapped carefully in tissue paper inside small cardboard boxes! The rural retreat of this personage edges one of the most strongly Socialist areas in the country, and his possession of so many Fascist emblems, in new condition, is not likely to pass unnoticed in the district.

* * *

I am charmed with the dear old lady who came up to London the other day for the first time since the war began. "If these Germans think they can frighten me by sitting up in those balloons all the time," she said, "they're very much mistaken."

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

Our prize of 5/- for the contribution at the head of the column goes this week to Lionel Randle

All cuttings should be addressed to "This England," 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1.

Those who take part in B.B.C. variety programmes are now told that they may use any term they like for the Nazi Government. Hitherto they have been restricted to the more polite descriptions.—*News Chronicle.*

Mr. Julius Harrison, conductor of the Hastings Municipal Orchestra, denied yesterday that he was banning Wagner from his programmes for the coming season. "It is my intention to include his works in the programme as liberally as in the past," he said. "I am not including a few items of Wagner's because they might suggest the Siegfried Line, and would not be acceptable at the moment."—*South Wales Echo and Express.*

May I request consideration of the following suggestion:—That the whole nation sing together at 11 a.m. every Sunday the Doxology. Everybody should join in—40,000,000 united voices. We have our National Silence together, so why not sing together?—Letter in *Liverpool Post.*

Why has Wells spoiled one novel after another by dragging in these nasty subjects? Men of letters, in my experience, are not adulterers.—Dean Inge in *Evening Standard.*

STARLIGHT

A GOOD many of us, I am sure, even if in our ignorance we smile at astrology, dip into the starry predictions in the Sunday papers, and feel a heightened cheerfulness when we read, in reference to those who were born in the same week as ourselves: "A three-star week for you: make the best of it." I have always in one part of my being had a weakness for what are called superstitions. If I see a painter standing on a ladder, for example, I walk under it, having been told that this is a good thing to do. I would not open an umbrella in the house. Not for a five-pound note—perhaps, not for a ten-pound note—

would I bring yarrow into the house, and I find it depressing to hear people quoting lines from *Macbeth*. Single magpies do not make me shudder or even, to any extent worth noticing, the number thirteen; but that is because I have had these omens against me again and again and have never known them to do me any harm. But about such things as spilled salt I am less certain; and, to be on the safe side, I throw a pinch over the left shoulder as did the men of old.

As for the influences of the stars, who am I that I should pronounce either for or against them? I have met one of the heads of a great railway system who assured me that every important event in his life for many years past had been exactly foretold by the astrologers. I should like to study the science of astrology if I could make head or tail of the jargon of its professors. But I am bewildered when I read about their trines and sextiles, their conjunctions and oppositions and squares. Hence I have to content myself with reading their forecasts without understanding how they arrived at them. During the present year my Sunday mornings were made brighter by their predictions that there would not be another World War, or even, if I remember right, a war in which England would be involved. I have at least this to thank them for.

On the eve of the outbreak of the present war, I read with considerable pleasure a little book, *Hitler's Last Year of Power** in which the author, Mr. Leonardo Blake, set out to foretell from the stars the major world events of 1939 and 1940. "Before this book has been published a month," wrote Mr. Blake, "the majority of people will believe that the disaster of a world war is inevitable. Be reassured: there will be no war." That was a good half-crown's-worth of news, though the events of the past few weeks seem to have disproved the prophecy. It may be argued, of course, that this is not a world war, but only a localised and temporary conflagration, and certainly Mr. Blake did not promise that there would not be plenty of trouble. He spoke of the coming September as "the fateful September," and foretold that "foreign countries will be attacked and there will be conflicts with neighbour States. There will be frivolous undertakings, exaggerated speeches and demands." I do not understand the precise meaning of the word "frivolous" in this context, and the forecast of "stirring up of things in all directions" for the 23rd of September seems to me a little vague. Where is a mention of the entry of France and England into the war, or of the Nazi-Soviet Pact?

It may be, I agree, that the Pact is not a genuine pact, but only a well-laid plot on the part of Stalin; and that may be what the author meant when he wrote: "Hitler and Stalin both have the same Mars position in their horoscopes. Thus it will be impossible for the gulf between Germany and Russia to be bridged so long as these two leaders are in power." That the gulf has not been bridged except in appearance is possible, and it is possible that the stars foretold this, but in a book of 190 pages the Pact ought surely to have been worth a line.

Again, the death of General von Fritsch should have been foreseen by Mars or Saturn or some other planet; but all we learn of the General is that "by his high ability and his firmness of character" he "will be one of those who relieve Hitler and play a significant role in Germany." And now, instead of that, General von Fritsch is dead.

In spite of such slight inaccuracies of prevision, however, the book is inspiriting reading, leaving the reader in no doubt that Hitlerism is nearing its end. "The European War," we are told, "which the Mars in Hitler's horoscope tells us so much about, will not break out. Before localised and minor conflicts extend themselves to a world conflagration, something that is least expected will happen. A change of temper will come about in Germany or there will be a new German revolution." In this matter, I think, the stars are right, and it is said even that German astrologers have warned Hitler of his coming doom. "We hear rumours," says Mr. Blake, "that courageous astrologers who drew his attention to gloomy aspects are to be thrown into concentration camps Perhaps it is because he suspects them to be Bolsheviks." Or, perhaps, English secret service men. In any case, one can understand Hitler's feeling rather impatient of star-gazers who predict nothing but evil of himself and his comrades. It can have been no joke for him to be told that "Hitler's Neptune stands in the house of death. . . . A malevolent Pluto also stands in the house of death in conjunction with Neptune. It is hardly possible to imagine a worse sign of growing disaster." It is interesting to learn, by the way, that "the Neptune in his horoscope tells us that Hitler's death will not be disclosed to the public or to the world at large. A veil of secrecy will surround it."

As for British statesmen, what happy fortunes await them in comparison with their German counterparts! "Chamberlain's Mars and Eden's Mars stand on Hitler's Saturn! The day will come when this Saturn takes him to his Waterloo. And not only do Chamberlain's Mars and Eden's Mars stand on Hitler's Saturn, they throw a square to his Mars." And again: "Hitler's Mars is in the seventh house. He wants to challenge the world. Eden's Mars is in the first house, square to it. He accepts the challenge with his whole being, says 'On with the struggle,' and counters Hitler's attack. Chamberlain's Mars does the same. He also takes up the struggle, but his Saturn watches his Mars and Hitler's Saturn with an overwhelming measure of self-control. Thus his method is not the same as Eden's." I wish the B.B.C. would persuade Mr. Howard Marshall to give a broadcast account of one of these three-cornered astrological boxing-matches. It would help to cheer us all up.

Hitler is in danger, however, not only from foreign statesmen and his own people, but from ill-health. "The Saturn in Leo in Hitler's horoscope reveals that the condition of his heart is not so sound as might be supposed. There is every reason to think that, at a decisive and critical moment, his heart may fail. And the rising Uranus with its Mercury opposition seriously aggravates this." As for the rest of the Nazi leaders, however physically fit they may be, they are all predestined victims of the coming revolution. "1940 will be a year of surprises for Goering." Ribbentrop's horoscope is described as being generally "catastrophic." "In the summer of 1940 his power will shrink more and more, on account of a bad transit of Saturn and Jupiter, and the spring of 1941 is especially ominous for Joachim von Ribbentrop." Streicher, now under arrest, is also warned: "When Uranus, in the summer of 1940, reaches a square to Streicher's Mars and to his Sun, the 'Red Tsar' may want to taste blood, but he must be careful that it is not his own."

I wonder whether astrological predictions are as popular in Germany as they have come to be in recent years in England, and whether the German astrologers have been making the same translations of the messages of the stars as their English fellow-scientists. Have they, too, been gladdening wishful thinkers like myself with the assurance that "there will be no great war," and making Sunday breakfast the brightest meal of the week with their forecasts? Or do astrologers differ from each other in their diagnoses like specialists in Harley Street? I cannot help thinking that, if a German astrologer published a book containing the same prophecies as *Hitler's Last Year of Power*, he would soon find himself behind barbed wire.

The only comfort that a Nazi could draw from this book is the news that two years hence Mr. Churchill will "have to meet with a period that will be serious and critical from the point of view of health." For the rest, if there is any conflict of interpretation between English and German astrologers, I am convinced that the English astrologers are right. The stars, however, seem to have been curiously reticent about the war—more so than in 1914, when the Great War was foretold in one edition of that excellent publication, *Old Moore's Almanac*.

Y. Y.

* Published by Andrew Dakers, 2*s*. 6*d*.

Miscellany

THEY HOLD THEIR TONGUES

SOME day, some intellectual day, when Satire revisits our madhouse, an entertaining book could be written around this war. Its title might be *They Hold Their Tongues*, and perhaps it would be a ballet rather than a book. The scene will be laid in the Ministry of Decontamination, in the Announcer's Parlour, and at the signs of the Walls Have Ears and the No Bird Sings. The enemy will also be shown, listening to us listening to him listening to us listening to him in an infinite series of sandbags, and the strain will become so great that the military mind will collapse and be unable to distinguish objective from base. Truth and falsehood will be disintegrated into particles which are so small as to be equally useless, and action will become so indirect as to be indirigible. Armies march in the correct direction in order to deceive their generals, airmen drop lethal messages wrapped round dud bombs, clergymen pray for evil lest their congregations be led into it, donkeys bark, dogs mew, cats mew too because cats are subtler than dogs. Enter the experts, for the military mind is conscious to-day of the existence of the mind. Enter the Science of Psychology. Officially installed in a cellar, it abolishes the art of knowing what people are like, and ensures that they are incomprehensible to themselves as well as to others. Frankness is as fatal as kindness, so all hold their tongues. Yes—it might be an amusing entertainment. But it will not be a genial one, and it will not end with an all-round laugh and a kindly apotheosis of the average man. It will have a touch of the rancid flatness which is a part of true satire—for Satire does not merely bite the victim, it lets down the reader too. A few grim survivors, aristocrats, may appreciate it. Swift might contribute. Blake even:

> I was buried near this dyke
> That my friends may weep as much as they like.

Dante too. Dante the fantasist—how wickedly he would have described the folk who have held their tongues so well that their tongues come off in their hands. There, beyond Phlegethon, he would place them, and at the base of each tongue would nestle an atrophied brain. Their enormous ears are sewn against their scalps, so that they listen in with a vengeance. Virgil points at the horrible posies, gathers his mantle around him, and registers historical disgust. "Here," says Virgil, "is the recompense of those who have gagged their countrymen for their country's sake, instead of praising their God. Here are the chiefs of police and the card-indexers, and the takers of finger-prints, and Creon, King of Thebes, who issued the fatal edict, and the silencers of Lorca. Look at them, take warning from those dribbling gullets and, while speech is yours, speak." Far away, beyond the other bank of the river, in Paradise, Beatrice, who is the divine wisdom, echoes the secular warning: "Speak, speak," she cries, "for in the beginning was the Word."

The light shineth in the darkness, and the light comprehendeth not the darkness. It was the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, but it has had to be put out. There is no place in a modern war for spontaneity, and never before has the spirit of man been so menaced and insulted. The cloud of his inventions has thickened, descended upon him, blacked him out. He is dazed by darkness. Night is right, and if he holds up so much as a candle to the naughty world, the airwarden reports him for beckoning to death. One natural gesture—and he may destroy himself and his friends. If indeed he still has any friends. Old intimacies may survive the censorship, but what new ones can grow up under it? In this scientific mist, this skilful and deliberate disintegration, what place can be found for the camaraderie and love that have sweetened wars in the past? Blood used to get warm before it was shed. Now—coldness, depression, suspicion, loneliness. Talks about the spy menace on the radio. Courage—abundance of courage, but it is the courage that dares not be neighbourly, lest the enemy smell out the place. "When two or three are gathered together . . ." As if by the intervention of Satan, all the old religious and moral tags work out wrong. When two or three are gathered together, they are more readily detected by hostile aircraft, so they must be prohibited.

Those of us who were brought up in the old order, when Fate advanced slowly, and tragedies were manageable, and human dignity possible, know that that order has vanished from the face of the earth. We are not so foolish as to suppose that fragments of it can be salvaged on some desert island. But since it is the best thing we knew or are capable of knowing, it has become a habit which no facts can alter, it has gone underground like the subterranean Nile in the Book of the Dead. Love, peace, speech, light—these four are the columns of the Temple of Osiris, which no longer stands upon earth. Descending with Dante and the old Egyptians, we seek subterranean streams, we adjust in some spiritual region the balance which has been upset for ever here, we rejoin our friends, we punish our victorious foes, and—most important of all—we see face to face, and know even as we are known. This is sometimes called faith. The honester word for it is Habit. It is no more than remembering a tune, it is carrying a rhythm in one's head after the instruments have stopped.

We hope of course that a new tune, inaudible to ourselves, is now being played to the young, and that one day it will re-echo and give them the strength which certainly keeps us going now. But on that point we can get no evidence, and never shall get any. We do expect though that those who chronicle this age and its silliness, and look back from their intellectual day upon us, the tongue-holders, will accord us not only pity, which we fully deserve, but disdain.

E. M. FORSTER

THE WORK OF FREUD

THERE is a popular superstition that the true value of a scientific theory can only be established many years after the death of its discoverer. But this is far from being universally the case. Newton was elected President of the Royal Society when he was only sixty and Darwin was buried in Westminster Abbey. It was a little surprising at first, then, to find an almost universal misapprehension of the scale of importance of Freud's work in the obituaries published at the beginning of the week, in spite of the fact that the main framework of his hypothesis was completed forty years ago. The more popular papers knew him, of course, only as the inventor of a couple of familiar *clichés* which in fact he never employed, while the more respectable ones described him as a physician who had made some valuable contributions to the treatment of nervous diseases. The *Manchester Guardian* concluded its notice with the following daring peroration:

> It is too early to attempt to review Freud's contribution to science, but his effect upon psychology, in English-speaking countries at least, has been greater than that of any writer since William James.

But compromise, into which Englishmen and journalists are so perpetually driven by their fears, cannot protect us in the case of Freud's hypotheses. Either he was totally mistaken or he was one of the half-dozen greatest men in the history of science: for his most far-reaching concepts lie implicit in his most elementary explanations of the very earliest data examined by him. And although, to the end of his long life, he continued with unabating energy to collect and to co-ordinate fresh masses of material, the epoch-making steps were the first ones. Upon our judgment of them our judgment of all that followed must depend.

What, then, was the nature of these first steps? They can be summed up very shortly. Freud was the first man of science to take the mind seriously. Starting from a presumption of the universality of the law of causation, he set out to discover how far it was possible to establish chains of cause and effect

that were *purely mental.* Apparently unbridgeable gaps in such chains became immediately obvious, not only in neurotics but in normal people: apparently uncaused mental events were constantly emerging. Previous investigators, taking a frivolous view of the mind, had given various explanations of these events: the openly cynical thought they were due to "chance," those who pretended to a more serious attitude pronounced that the missing causes were physiological. Freud, on the other hand, put forward the hypothesis that the discontinuity in the causal chain of mental events applied only to mental events that were *conscious;* if one assumed that there existed other mental events that were *unconscious,* the discontinuity would vanish. The validity of this hypothesis, framed in the first instance merely to explain some of the phenomena of hysteria, was proved by its immense fruitfulness —by the enormous number of other mental phenomena which it explained and brought to light. It was, indeed, the threshold of a new continent that had been crossed. It was not merely that many forms of mental illness began to be intelligible. Light poured in upon the processes of the normal mind as well. The nature of dreams was for the first time understood. The development of the sexual instinct and in particular its early phases in childhood came to light. Our whole view of the growth of children in relation to their environment was radically changed. So too was our knowledge of the relation of the individual to society—knowledge which might lead eventually to a fresh basis both for education and for the treatment of delinquency. In yet other directions, vistas were opened which gave glimpses of the underlying determinants of religion, of play, and of art.

But in order to see what lay beyond the threshold of the new continent something more was needed than the hypothesis alone. An instrument must be found: to the laws of Copernicus must be added the telescope of Galileo. In this case the instrument was a relation between the investigator and the subject of his investigation. Freud arrived at a technical method by means of which the subject's mind was made peculiarly accessible to the investigator. But he also paid special attention to the frame of mind of the investigator himself. The frame of mind of a person who is trying to observe what is happening in someone else's mind does not differ from that of any other scientific observer: he must be detached yet receptive, open-minded yet critical, placid yet observant, unemotional yet interested; he must try to see what is really there and not what he *wants* to see or what he thinks he *ought* to see. It is never easy for a human being to be in such a frame of mind, but for one who is investigating the mind of another human being the difficulties are immense. It is indeed largely because of the greatness of those difficulties that we had to wait for a Freud before the science of psychology could get under way. But though the pioneer must possess special qualities, the path is easier for those who come afterwards. It was possible for Freud to determine more exactly the nature of the obstacles and in particular to reveal the fact that the most important of them are unconscious: there may, for instance, be something in the investigator's mind of which he is so much afraid that he cannot see something similar in the mind which he is investigating. Thus the necessity for a preliminary training for the investigator became evident; while the technical conditions of the investigation itself would be particularly favourable to keeping him in the requisite frame of mind. It is worth while stressing the importance of this side of Freud's work since the influences which have made psychology a laggard among the sciences are constantly at work. Not merely is its subject-matter obscure and elusive, but our instrument for observing the subject-matter is for ever liable to become dimmed and distorted. There is a real risk, which is not present in the other sciences, of work being undone and discoveries forgotten.

For this reason, too, Freud was always rightly anxious never to lay stress upon the therapeutic effects of psycho-analysis. These are, indeed, sufficiently great, and there are many conditions which can be affected by no other method of treatment. Nevertheless, we know well enough that therapeutic results are a deceptive criterion of scientific truth: they offer a handy though illegitimate weapon to partisans on either side. Ultimately, of course, a greater knowledge of reality and of the laws that govern it will most probably increase our power of dealing with abnormalities and insufficiencies. Such has always been the case with the physical sciences and it is likely to be equally true of psychology. And it is because he was the first to give us knowledge of the strange reality of our own minds that the name of Freud will be immortal.

JAMES STRACHEY

IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

LET me take this other glove off
As the *vox humana* swells,
And the beauteous fields of Eden
Bask beneath the Abbey bells.
Here, where England's statesmen lie,
Listen to a Lady's cry.

Gracious Lord, oh bomb the Germans,
Spare their women for Thy sake,
But if that is not so easy,
We will pardon Thy mistake.
And, gracious Lord, whate'er shall be,
Don't let anyone bomb me.

Keep our Empire undismembered,
Guide our forces, by Thy Hand,
Gallant blacks from far Jamaica,
Honduras and Togoland;
Protect them, Lord, in all their fights,
And, even more, protect the whites.

Think of what our nation stands for—
Books from Boot's and country lanes,
Free speech, free passes, class distinction,
Democracy and proper drains.
Lord, put beneath Thy Special Care
One-eighty-nine Cadogan Square.

Although, dear Lord, I am a sinner,
I have done no major crime;
Now I'll come to Evening Service
Whensoever I have time.
So, Lord, reserve for me a crown,
And do not let my shares go down.

I will labour for Thy Kingdom,
Help our lads to win the war,
Send white feathers to the cowards,
Join the Women's Army Corps,
Then wash the steps around Thy Throne
In the Eternal Safety Zone.

Now I feel a little better.
What a treat to hear Thy Word
Where the bones of leading statesmen
Have so often been interred—
And now, dear Lord, I cannot wait
Because I have a luncheon date.

ARCHIBALD OLDYS

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Tony Draws a Horse," at the Comedy

This play has already had a run of two hundred and fifty nights, and now it will be acted every day at two-thirty. It is most excellent distraction. It belongs to that class of light comedy which appeals to the widest public, to which *French Without Tears, Spring Meeting* and *When We Are Married* belonged. It is full of good-humoured laughter and shrewdness. Every character is instantly recognisable as a type and admirably interpreted, even down to the small parts such as the new parlour-maid, hopelessly stupid, the Jewish orator (Mr. Antony Holles) and

Grandpapa (Mr. Jimmy Godden). There are some first-rate domestic rows, and they are started by a small boy's drawing of a horse in which that animal's sex was perhaps unduly emphasised —any rate, his father, a conventional doctor (excellently played by Mr. Alistair Macintyre) thought so. Complicated effects arising from trivial causes is one of the roots of comedy, and the playwright's economy of means as well as his invention of situation are admirable. The presiding spirit of womanly humbug is impersonated with a delicious appreciation of it by Miss Lilian Braithwaite, who uses all her art, and is beautifully supported by Mr. Henry Hewitt in the part of her mild and deprecating husband. Mr. Parsons has, however, his hour of reckless defiance, when the sympathy of the audience is released in loud laughter. None of the actors and actresses is ever out of key, certainly in the case of Mr. Richard Bird the acting was most subtly exact—not in the least conventional. The result is a good two hours of sensible, heart-easing amusement. There is also one moment of really surprising comic invention, which we will leave playgoers to spot.

"Trois de St. Cyr," at the Paris
"Andy Hardy Gets Spring Fever," at the Empire

St. Cyr, the convent in which *Esther* and *Athalie* were given their first performances, was converted by Napoleon into a training college for officers. On Sundays its pupils enliven Paris with their plumed shakoes, and St. Cyr in a world of khaki and tanks retains a tradition of *panache*, which makes it more photogenic than Sandhurst. When somebody thought of making a film about St. Cyr, the shape of the story was at once fixed by the immutable laws of scenario. Three young men, two of them rivals in love with the sister of the third. Misunderstandings between the chaps followed by sentimental, almost flirtatious, reconciliations. The Desert. The Treacherous Natives. The Girl in Danger. One Death, one Marriage, one *Marseillaise*. Less expensive, less effective and less silly than *Beau Geste* or *Bengal Lancer*, this French film is always agreeable to look at. The scenes in the Ecole Militaire have been made on the spot with the collaboration of the French War Office, and in the desert-scenes we see the French mechanised army in movement. In piping times of peace this would be a very pleasant film. *Andy Hardy Gets Spring Fever* is another instalment of what should not be called the Hardy Saga. Under the influence of the Spring, Andy succumbs to the charms of a school-teacher, his father to those of a confidence-trickster. All ends happily, though the rescue of the Judge's finances does not stand examination. Mr. Rooney is marvellously accomplished in the exposition of adolescence, shyly proud, helplessly aggressive, clumsily charming. The film is made for those that like three lumps of sugar in their tea, but it has some topical use, by its assumption that kindness, humour and honesty are the normal qualities of *homo sapiens*.

VIEWS ABOUT THE U.S.S.R.

(A flood of articles and letters has reached us on the subject of the U.S.S.R.; we print a few representative views.)

A number of writers to THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION appear to find the foreign policy of the Soviet Union difficult to explain or to reconcile with their theories regarding that State. Now I can quite understand people hating the Soviet Union. If I were rich enough, or believed a quarter of the anti-Soviet propaganda which I read, I probably should hate it myself. But I cannot understand how an intelligent person can find its policy in any way inconsistent. On the contrary, it appears to be almost fantastically consistent, certainly far more so than those of the British, French, or German Governments. Of course, the Soviet policy changes, and changes dramatically. But these changes occur in response to changed circumstances.

The Soviet policy is based on an objection to two things, capitalism and war, which the rulers of the Union, and the vast majority of its people, believe to be intimately connected. They want to see other countries adopt Socialism. Further, they believe that attempts to bring Socialism about by constitutional means would be countered by Fascist revolution in most countries where parliamentary government exists, while in Fascist countries Socialism could only be established by revolution from the Left. Hence they hope to see revolutions in other countries.

Lenin naturally hoped that the revolutions of 1919 in Central Europe would lead to Socialism there, as in Russia. When this hope failed two policies were open: to devote their main effort to stirring up revolution abroad, or to building Socialism at home. The former was the policy of Trotsky, the latter is that of Stalin. Stalin realises that genuine revolutions must come from within, and that in most circumstances an attempt to impose Socialism from without would be regarded as imperialism. For this reason Outer Mongolia has not been abruptly socialised. It is a democratic republic with a strong tendency towards Socialism, but capitalism has not been fully abolished there. The Government of the Soviet Union could abolish it to-morrow if it wished, but it prefers to wait for the Mongolians to do so of their own free will. A peaceful and constitutional transition to Socialism is far more probable in Outer Mongolia than in Great Britain.

Those who admit the validity of the preceding paragraph may yet argue as follows. The Soviet Government hopes for Socialist revolutions in the countries defeated in a war. Hence they have deliberately manoeuvred France, Britain and Poland into a war with Germany. Their policy has been devilishly clever, but if it is a peace policy for themselves, it is a war policy for others. The idea of a peace front including Russia, like that of a popular front including Communists, was merely a cunning trap designed by Stalin to lead up to such a war as this. If this argument is true, Stalin is a warmonger like Hitler, only a much cleverer one. We must, therefore, examine it carefully.

Let us begin by comparing the positions of Stalin and Roosevelt. Roosevelt has to deal with two problems. On the one hand he has a vast army of unemployed and under-employed. On the other he must placate American capitalists who would like to see profits as high as in the golden days of Coolidge. Now, as a matter of hard fact, both these aims will be at least partially achieved as the result of the present war. If the arms embargo is repealed large numbers of Americans will be employed in making munitions. The rise in value of "War babies," as shares in the armament and allied industries are called, shows that the American capitalists look forward to a boom. In addition American exporters will capture neutral markets from their British, French, and German competitors, and even if no American ship sails to Europe, they will be freed from competition in their own hemisphere.

When it suits them, the Nazis will probably say that Roosevelt is an unscrupulous warmonger, who egged on Britain and France against Germany for the above reasons. This is, of course, absolutely false. Not only is Roosevelt a fundamentally decent man, but he realises two things. His country may yet be involved in the war; and the war boom is from its very nature a temporary boom followed by a peace slump.

Similarly, war is not an unmixed evil for the rulers of a capitalist nation. It solves the problem of unemployment, and even if profits are restricted on the whole, certain groups of capitalists, often in very close touch with the Government, amass immense fortunes.

But the Soviet Union has no unemployment, and very little foreign trade. It can export certain raw materials, such as oil and manganese ore. It needs machinery, and other raw materials such as rubber. A war between other nations cannot cure its unemployment, for it has none to cure, and is just as likely to raise the price of its imports as of its exports. And a war in which it is itself engaged, or even a mobilisation, as at present, simply means a diversion of labour from production. Thus the Soviet Union is the only nation which can make no economic gains from war.

Politically, Stalin might be pleased enough that Britain and France should fight Germany, if he could be quite certain that the war would be localised. But this is very far from sure. On the contrary, the Soviet Union is more likely to be drawn in than the United States. And, if we take the lowest possible view of Soviet foreign policy, and suppose that Moscow aspires to be the capital of an empire covering the whole earth (which is nonsense, if only because the Russians have a sense of humour), it would still pay the Soviets to keep out of war for a very simple reason. Their production per man and their population are both increasing faster than those of any other country. They can afford to wait.

For this reason I believe that the Soviet Government was sincere in its support, first of the League, and, even after Britain and France broke the Covenant, of a peace alliance, provided it was an alliance of a really solid and practical character. As the British Government would not form such an alliance, they signed

a pact with Germany which automatically localised the war. For since the British navy did not have to face Japan, it could be concentrated in the Mediterranean, and instead of Italy cutting British communications in the event of a war, Britain could cut Italian communications. So Italy and Spain stayed out, and the British and French empires are only threatened at their centres.

Given this situation, the Soviet policy with regard to Poland followed inevitably. If the Red Army's westward march had been delayed for a week, I, for one, should have confessed myself unable to understand the Soviet policy, and should almost have begun to believe that the Soviet-German agreement was an alliance instead of a non-aggression pact. The Red Army occupied the Byelo-Russian and Ukrainian-speaking areas of Poland, and their inhabitants will be incorporated into the existing Byelo-Russian and Ukrainian republics without much difficulty. If there is a plebiscite in these regions after the war, I do not doubt that an overwhelming majority will vote for the Soviet Union, provided the plebiscite is as free as that in the Saar region.

But the occupation of Polish-speaking districts creates a different problem. If Stalin really proposed to partition Poland along the line of the Narew, Vistula, and San, then he would be a successor of Catherine the Great, and a century and a half behind the times. But he is well aware of the fact that the Poles have an intense national sentiment, even if they have not always respected that of other peoples. And as a specialist in the problem of nationalities within the Soviet Union, he will doubtless pay full attention to this sentiment. The treatment of the Polish-speaking part of Poland which the Red Army is occupying will be the most searching test of Soviet policy.

The Soviets will start with one advantage. Many of the Poles in the occupied districts will hate the Russians. But they will certainly hate the Germans worse. And though it is possible to explain the inactivity of the French and British armies on military grounds, the Poles will find it harder to comprehend the doubtless cogent reasons why there was no aerial retaliation for the bombing of Warsaw, although there certainly would have been for that of Paris or London. Even the Pope, who as Nuncio at Warsaw in 1920 condoned Polish imperialism and is said to have supported it, may lose adherents now that this imperialism has borne its fruits. So the Poles may find that their Russian invaders shine, at least by comparison.

The contrast will soon be deepened. In the German-occupied area there will be starvation, and the men will be drafted to work in Germany. In the Russian-occupied area this will not be so. If the land is given to the peasants, as seems likely, the Russians will soon have millions of friends. And thus if a Poland shorn of its eastern and western provinces is reconstituted, it will have a distinct Russophil bias, and be ill-disposed to the Third Reich, though not to a peaceful Germany. In fact if the Soviet policy in Poland is correct the Polish nation should become an element of peace and stability in Europe, whereas since 1919 it has been the opposite. But if this end is to be achieved, it is idle to pretend that the task of the Russians in Poland will be easy or simple. But their position in Poland is at least intelligible from their own point of view. Whereas a study of Hitler's policy convinces me that he has not read the important passage in *Alice in Wonderland* dealing with the Owl and the Panther, or if so has not been able to complete the final line.*

I believe that the main reason why people of the Left in Britain cannot comprehend Soviet policy is this. "Why," they ask, "does Moscow draw no distinction between the Western democracies and Nazi Germany? We have an active Labour movement. The German trade unions are abolished. The Communist Party is not illegal in Britain, but Communists are beheaded in Germany. The present Soviet policy is only explicable if Stalin has a sympathy for Hitler's methods." The answer is simple. "What do you mean by *we*? Do you mean Britain or the British Empire, France or the French Empire? I would sooner be a Jew in Berlin than a Kaffir in Johannesburg or a negro in French Equatorial Africa. If the Czechs are treated as an inferior race, do Indians or Annamites enjoy complete equality?"

*I passed by his garden, and marked with one eye
How the owl and the panther were sharing a pie.
The panther took pie-crust and gravy and meat,
While the owl had the dish as his share of the treat.
The banquet once over, the owl as a boon,
Was kindly permitted to pocket the spoon,
While the panther received knife and fork with a growl,
And concluded the banquet by . . .

Until the British and French Empires become Commonwealths, they can only expect Soviet friendship if their foreign policy is a hundred per cent. peace policy. With their existing record, they could only expect Soviet help on Soviet terms in the past. And they cannot hope that, to aid them to-day, the Soviet Union will antagonise the people of Germany, which may, when Hitler falls, become at least as democratic as England, and much more so than the British Empire. The British and French peoples may prefer to fight their battles under the leadership of the men of Munich, with the firm resolve to preserve their rule over the coloured peoples of their own empires. But if so they can hardly complain that the Soviet Union remains neutral in the struggle, and occupies itself in stemming Hitler's advance and abolishing feudalism in Eastern Europe.

J. B. S. HALDANE.

I should like to congratulate you on your admirable leader on the Russian move. It was clear, balanced, sensible, alert to the possibilities in the new situation for the future. There could not have been a better lead to intelligent opinion in the country, particularly to the Labour Movement, if it would listen.

When Lord Esher writes of the "treachery" of Stalin, one should ask "Treachery to whom?" Anyone would think, to hear these people talk, that it was not only an obligation, but a privilege, for Stalin to come to *their* rescue. The brazen effrontery of it after their behaviour to Soviet Russia in the past twenty years! They may now find the manner, and the timing, of Stalin's move very upsetting for them. But that's only politics: what about their own behaviour?—the dirty treachery of the elections of 1931 and 1924, the swindle of 1935, from the consequences of which we are still suffering. The Labour Movement, in its generosity, may have forgotten, but it is the business of those of us who are historians to remember.

What is important for us is the line that the Left should take in this matter. It is dotty for the Labour Movement to line up with the governing class in anti-Russianism; to suggest, as Mr. Greenwood and the *Daily Herald* seem to do, that there is no difference between Stalin and Hitler. Even the Government has had the sense to lie low and not at any rate to attack the Russians. They leave that to lunatics on the Left, when of course it is our business to be as friendly to Soviet Russia as possible, all the more so in present circumstances.

It is infinitely important from all points of view that we should not antagonise Russia and explore what chances there are in this new situation of reaching an understanding. (Of course, Great Britain should have come to an understanding with Russia before, when it had the chance.) Fancy preferring the Poles to the Russians! The ineptitude of it! Fancy giving Poland a guarantee *before* finding out what Russia's attitude was. Mr. Lloyd George pointed out the insanity of that, once and for all, in the House last March. But this cargo of smug, self-complacent, second-rate old men which the country is carrying—precisely the same government, except for Baldwin and Runciman, which has led us step by step into this mess ("Be reasonable! If I hadn't told you that I wouldn't bring you here, you wouldn't have come."—Low)—this government went blindly on its way. And behold where they have landed us!

Well, what to do now? It is obviously essential not to antagonise Russia, from the point of view of the interests of this country, let alone anything else. Isn't it much better for us that the Russians should be in possession of half Poland? A frontier that runs through the city of Warsaw is obviously temporary. Wouldn't it be better for us and for Europe if they were to incorporate the rest? It is not right that Poland should be divided in two between two different powers; isn't it better that an integral Poland should become part of a Federation of Soviet Republics?

There are other considerations on the same side. This country may have reason to be grateful that the Russians are covering the Rumanian frontier. More power to their elbow! We should be hoping that the Russians are strong enough to prevent any German advance into the Balkans. How do we know what useful effects the communising of half Poland may have on the remainder, on the bankrupt landlordism of East Prussia which gave Hitler his opportunity in 1933? Will it be such a good thing for the Germans to have the Bolsheviks in their rear, as once before in 1917–18?

It is obvious what tremendous potentialities there are in the situation, potentialities which, if properly explored, may turn very much to our advantage in our struggle with Germany.

And not of this country only. There is more involved than that. That is why it is peculiarly obtuse of Labour people not to

see the opportunities that are opening up for us. The Russian move is not only a move in their national interest. It is ridiculous to treat it as merely a move in a power-politics game with Hitler; it gives them an advanced position, a jumping-off board for all that failed to materialise in the years after the last war, for social change in Europe. Suppose Germany is defeated, is even held in the west, which is equivalent to a defeat for her, with the Russians now on their eastern frontier? Doesn't that enormously increase the chance of Germany going Communist?

Be sure that our own governing class has got its eyes well open to that possibility; and don't be too sure that they won't make an attempt to come to terms, if not with Hitler, perhaps with Goering and the Reichswehr, against the Red Menace. That would leave our simple noodles of Labour folk standing.

In fact what we should do in the interests of the country is to hold ourselves free, some day when the bankruptcy of our regime since the last war is patent even to the people, as it is already to the intelligent, to form an alternative government that can come to an understanding with Russia. It may be necessary if we are really going to defeat Hitler; and it may be necessary, in order to get that understanding, to see a change of government, and perhaps of regime in this country.

So I would counsel the Labour Movement to beware and keep its eyes open to all the possibilities in the new situation.

A. L. ROWSE
(Labour candidate, permanently it would seem, for Penryn and Falmouth).

Oxford.

Mr. Wellock, in his courageous letter, shows the similarity between the German and Russian systems which makes it possible for them to unite in one mighty destructive movement for the overthrow of the "bourgeois democracies." Whilst the Nazis make their frontal armed assault upon the "plutocracies" and their satellites, the Red Army can enter the semi-feudal states of Eastern Europe as the *soi-disant* deliverer of the oppressed peasants.

If by "extreme Left" Mr. Wellock means the Communists and their fellow travellers, I think he is mistaken in assuming that they may be expected to withdraw their support of the war. The policy of the Comintern is to urge the working class to continue fighting in spite of the fact that Berlin and Moscow are now acting in concert. The Communist idea is that the war will lead to the aggrandisement of the U.S.S.R. and the weakening of everyone else. Stalin's primary motive in making his pact with Hitler was his fear of Germany, and the belief that the Pact would ensure a war between Germany and ourselves. Peace now between Germany, France and England would probably mean that Germany would turn on Russia and take from her not only the territories she is now occupying but much besides. Hence the fierce abuse of pacifists and of all those who show an awareness of the true situation.

The Communists outside Russia are being told that a long war is now the only road to world revolution, and some "intellectuals" manage to convince themselves by jesuitical arguments that a destructive war, in which millions will be killed and millions more reduced to famine conditions, will defeat Fascism and bring the world to Socialism. It is their inability to perceive the close similarity between the Fascist and "Communist" states, in this historical period, which now leads them to become what Lenin called social patriots. They do not realise that the thing they fight against is the same as the thing they fight for. The belief that the U.S.S.R. is the antithesis of Nazi Germany, the belief that concentration camps, executions and imprisonment without trial, terror and the secret police, and the destruction of all civil liberties, are good in the U.S.S.R., and only horrible in Nazi Germany, blinds the "Left" to the fact that conquest by the U.S.S.R. is no more desirable than conquest by Nazi Germany.

The strangest phenomenon is that so few people perceive the similarity not only in the political systems, but also in the social and political structure, of Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia. In Germany the state *controls* land and capital; in Russia the state *owns* land and capital. The thin dividing line between control and ownership is fast disappearing in Germany, and soon the capitalists will have ceased to exist as a class. In Russia, where the revolution started from below, the capitalists were liquidated and the bureaucracy is of a different social origin to the German. The only difference this makes is that the Russian bureaucracy is less efficient than the German. In both countries a bureaucracy headed by an autocratic Leader, owns the state, and through the state has absolute control (ownership) of land and capital and of the lives and thoughts of men. In both countries the workers' organisations are state organisations, and the workers have no means to defend themselves against excessive exploitation.

National Socialism, Red or Brown, may be the new society which we cannot escape. The fact that it is so different to the Socialism we have worked and hoped for does not mean that it is not the coming social system. Capitalism did not turn out to be at all what those who inspired and led the mighty forces released by the French Revolution envisaged as the society to follow the destruction of feudal privilege and serfdom.

The degree to which democratic rights and liberties, and all those values which we call civilisation, can be preserved, will depend upon how and in what circumstances the transition from our outworn social system to a national planned economy is made. It seems certain that if we do not withdraw from this war against the combined forces of Hitlerism and Stalinism the new power arising from misery and chaos will be that of brute force exercised by a ruthless minority as in Russia and Germany.

5 New End Square, N.W.3. FREDA UTLEY

In your article "Brest Litovsk Revenged," you attack the *Times* for using inflamatory language about the action of Soviet Russia in invading Poland. You refer to such language as being unpatriotic, and as likely to cement the friendship of Hitler and Stalin.

Though I am amongst those who have long ago given up reading the *Times*, I do not think that it would be necessary to hunt for long through the files of that paper to find occasions on which it referred to such as you, Sir, and such as me, as being unpatriotic in the attitude that we adopted towards the friendship of Hitler and Mussolini. You must remember that it is not easy for those of us who have got into the habit of thinking ideologically to get out of it, and therefore the suggestion that you make further on in the same article that it is the path of wisdom to strengthen the diplomatic ties of this country in Moscow, is, to say the least of it, distasteful.

There have been references lately to the despondent feeling of the people of this country. If that is the case, then I am sure that I have contributed my share, and the reason has nothing to do with the Ministry of Information, or any of the other suggested causes. It is due to the fact that, to me at any rate, the action of Russia puts us in an impossible position. I think that the thing that most of us felt that we were fighting for can best be summed up as "decency," and though we knew that Poland had not been very decent to Czechoslovakia, we were prepared to overlook that. But the action of Russia, no matter to what extent it may have been attributable to our own so inexpedient expediency, strikes some of us as little less decent than the attitude of Germany. Instinctively we feel that Mussolini is right for once when he says that Britain has compromised her moral position by refusing to declare war on Russia. It is beyond doubt that we promised that we would help Poland if she became the victim of aggression, and we gave that help indirectly when Germany aggressed. How, morally, can we refuse similar help in the case of Russia?

All this is not bad fun for the *Times* and the Conservatives generally. They have been longing to be able to have a good curse at Russia, but a heavy blow has fallen on those of us who have been striving for decent and fair conditions for our own people, for the right of other peoples to live in peace and unhampered by the fear of superior force, and have urged that Russia was one of the greatest powers that we could enlist for the attainment of these ends. I cannot feel that the attitude that you adopt is going to help us get over this blow, and go on working for our old ideals. To us, "expediency" is something that stinks, and the idea of winning a war by its means is something that we definitely do not feel to be worth while. GEOFFREY ACLAND

Lowbridge, Kendal.

I cannot help feeling that it is high time for progressives in this country to stop what I can only describe as repining about the Soviet Government having ditched the British Government of Mr. Chamberlain—as it undoubtedly has.

Is it not rather our job to work harder, and to unite more closely than ever before in order to remove from office a government which, whatever we think about the Soviet Union, has got the British people into that "fiasco" of which Stalin issued his now famous, but then unheeded, warning last spring. I suggest that as and when we help ourselves by getting a government capable of prosecuting the war effectively, and of securing the right kind of peace, we shall find that other progressive forces

in the world, including the Soviet Union, may be willing to work with us—but not until.

As to the Soviet Union's present activities I would like to say merely this. Mr. Lloyd George pointed out in his notable article of last Sunday that opinion as to the effect upon the issue of the war of the Soviet's occupation of Eastern Poland was rapidly changing. What was thought to be a great assistance to Germany is now thought to be the one serious blow to German aggression, above all in South-Eastern Europe, which anyone has so far struck.

I suggest that there is a danger that this swing of opinion is going too far. It is quite true that the Soviet Union's action is not designed to help Germany, but neither is it designed to help Britain. And if we return to the comfortable belief that after all, and in spite of everything, the Soviet Union can be relied upon to do the dirty work of stopping Nazi aggression for us, while we sit back comfortably blockading, we shall find ourselves in another sad and great "fiasco." JOHN STRACHEY

112 Regents Park Road,
N.W.1.

SIR,—Mr. Wilfred Wellock argues that Germany and Russia have come together because they possess a common ideology. I question his major premise, i.e., that all states possessing a common ideology must come together. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries France and the Holy Roman Empire had a common ideology—Roman Catholicism; that did not prevent their fighting each other. So much for Mr. Wellock's reasoning.

The explanation of the Nazi-Soviet Pact is surely obvious: both countries seek to extend their power and they judge co-operation the easiest way of doing so. MELVILLE BUCKLAND

The Lansdowne Club,
Berkeley Square, W.1.

SIR,—What is the difference between the Russian invasion of Poland to retain possession of the "Russian parts" and the German invasion of Czechoslovakia to retain possession of the "Austrian parts"? Why did THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION condemn the latter while they say they do not complain of the former?

Russia had an anti-aggression pact with Poland which has been deliberately broken, but does THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION—that doughty champion of pacts—express its horror and indignation? Oh! no—it does not mention it at all! Apparently you are prepared to agree to the permanent partition of Poland, whose "unhappy plight" you only mention after the fashion of the Walrus and the Carpenter, though you rent the air with sobs over the people of Prague! While I do not share the political opinions of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION at least I applauded your championship of small nations. I now see that this was merely for the pleasure of being "agin the Government" and had no underlying principle, and I feel sadly disillusioned.

I do not think the *Times* was wise in its leading article—these are days when expediency must, I fear, be considered—but there is not one honest Englishman whose blood has not boiled as he read of Poland desperately defending herself against overwhelming odds, stabbed in the back by a neighbour who had promised to respect her integrity.

As to the unholy alliance between Russia and Germany, dog has eaten dog before this and may do so again.

5 Canning Place, RACHEL CAULFEILD
Palace Gate, W.8.

Correspondence

WAR AIMS

[*We have space for only a small selection from the many letters asking, in one form or another, what the war is about.—Ed. N.S. & N.*]

SIR,—I find among my friends and acquaintances of all classes a tendency just now to run round in circles, enquiring what this war is about. It is perhaps natural that the rapidity of the recent moves in Eastern Europe should have set many minds a-flutter. But surely what the war is about remains quite clear. Hitler is determined to dominate the world by military force: Great Britain and France are determined to stop him. I rather think the Soviet Union means to stop him too, though its attitude is complicated by dislike of Western capitalism and scurvy treatment at Mr. Chamberlain's hands. Our job, at any rate, is to go on doing what we can to stop Hitler, and at the same time doing our best to get on terms with the Soviet Union, which is now an essential party to any European peace. HOWARD KNOWLES

Mill Hill.

SIR,—Since more than half of Poland is now in Russian hands and German aggression seems to be checked in the East as well as in the West, is it not time for the Government to state more clearly its war aims, and the type of settlement it regards as possible? T. P.

SIR,—Setting aside for a moment the "moral issues" of this war, these three curious but quite indisputable propositions come into view:

(1) Official Germany wants to stop it: witness the whole trend of their official radio propaganda, their general solicitude, so far, on the subject of air-attack to France and Britain, their amiability to trawler captains, and so on.

(2) The ordinary people of this country want to stop it: witness any man on any bus who sooner or later remarks: "If you ask me, it's all nobbut a bloody nuisance!" or words to that effect.

(3) The only sort of people who are going to get any advantage whatever out of it are the few very big financial interests: oil, aircraft, chemicals and what not.

In the light of these three interesting propositions we can now return to the "moral issues" earlier set aside, and reflect how thankful we should be in possessing statesmen so inflexibly aware of the difference between good and evil. Perhaps one day they may even find a moment to tell us what it is; even to outline their proposals for "destroying Hitlerism" without first destroying millions of the German people that they love so well—to say nothing of millions of our own. MARCHAND BISHOP

Bixley Haven, Woodbury, Exeter.

SIR,—Would it not be possible to hold a *Referendum* on the question of continuing the war relentlessly or calling an armistice now?

If the reply were in favour of *fighting* until the Nazi regime is overthrown then at least we shall know that we are a free people fighting from our sincere conviction against an enemy whose people were coerced into war without the chance of saying yea or nay. On the other hand, may not the majority feel that, with no hatred of the German people in their hearts and a loathing of the whole business of war, it is worth trying to hold a conference *now* and putting constructive terms before the world. There could be no suggestion of "weakness" on our part if our forces were held in readiness to strike should the conference break down, but once the peoples have looked into the abyss is it not possible that reason would gain the day and thus achieve a juster settlement than either victor or vanquished could hope for after a war? Would not the German people be likely to end their own tyranny if war ceased now and they realised what its continuance would mean?

This so-called lull seems Heaven-sent for the purpose, and who knows what pacific role Russia might not exert in such circumstances? DAVID A. PEAT

SIR,—It is obvious now that it was a mistake to leave the arrangements for helping Poland entirely in the hands of the Milk Marketing Board, and that the appropriate military authorities should also have been consulted. The result may easily lead to some disgruntlement among the Poles, for, as one of them has good-humouredly remarked: "An Anglo-French guarantee is murder in the first degree."

However, the situation has been partly retrieved by the prompt declaration of the British Government that the event has only served to strengthen its determination, and by Mr. Chamberlain's spontaneous assurance that the Poles will not be forgotten. Other countries are now implicitly assured that the same sequence will be observed in all similar cases, namely, guarantee, annihilation, stiffening of the resolution of the British Cabinet, and a note in the Cabinet minutes to that effect.

As for the immediate outlook, a lead has been given by the *Times* in an article which concludes with the view that the prospect of a struggle for Poland between the rival Soviet and Nazi organisations will be diverting. The operative word is diverting. Here is a useful supplement to the B.B.C.'s programmes and a Heaven-sent gift in response to the demand for greater cheerfulness. We no longer have to worry about the pronunciation of Przemysl: the joke is on the old Hun and the Bolshie. As the Polish captives

get shuttlecocked from one side of the Vistula to the other we sit back and get a good laugh, while the jockeying for positions on the Baltic should be a perfect scream. There are endless possibilities and we can look forward to a series of devastatingly witty fourth leaders from the wags of Printing House Square. This should last us over the winter. G. L. SCHWARTZ

London, N.2.

THE B.B.C. AND THE WAR

SIR,—Your correspondents are lenient. At the outbreak of war the B.B.C. was broadcasting eight programmes (with overlapping items) on a dozen wavelengths of the long and medium waves. It now broadcasts one inferior programme on two wavelengths. This week's *Radio Times* gives the names of seventeen different stations broadcasting in France, and anyone with a decent set can pick up eight to ten German stations. The B.B.C. still draws its large revenue for a service which, in the main, it has ceased to provide. G. H. BOSWORTH

EVACUATED TEACHERS

SIR,—Let "An Evacuated Teacher" cease from self-pity and sneers at the vicar's sewing class, and do some work. For years, country Labour Parties would have welcomed the help of speakers and money from their comrades in the towns. But the possible speakers were too busy in Left Book Clubs, and other centres of "intelligent discussion," and the money was being spent by the Trade Unions on safe industrial constituencies. Now, at the expense of the whole country, the National Government has flooded the countryside with Left-wing teachers and with women who are accustomed to share in the ward activities in Labour Boroughs. What an opportunity to spread Labour convictions in the areas which the Party must win! And let "An Evacuated Teacher" remember that feudalism and the landed gentry do not maintain their power by such vulgar means as political meetings, but, much less ostentatiously, through the quiet and persistent influence of the Women's Institute and the "vicar's sewing class." Intelligent and sympathetic propaganda in those quarters might soon transform the "backward areas" into good Labour divisions.

H. N. HORNE

SIR,—One has read of the death of millions of Russian peasants in the ruthless industrialisation of that country, of the death and starvation of millions of Chinese in the Sino-Japanese conflict, of the frightfulness of air raids in Barcelona, Madrid, and Warsaw, and of the poverty in the "special areas" in Great Britain, and one has succeeded in retaining a shred of sanity, but the plight of "An Evacuated Teacher," doomed, for an uncertain period, to live amid the rudeness and barbarity of an English village, deprived of her usual distractions, and troubled by the thought that her enforced withdrawal from "progressive society" will be an irreparable loss to posterity, is surely the last straw! There is an end to what one can endure even to contemplate!

MARGARET H. FORSYTH

CARPETS

SIR,—On the front page of your issue of September 16th you published a statement that the wholesale price of carpets had been increased by 60 per cent. Anyone reading the paragraph would understand that British Carpet Manufacturers had increased their prices by 60 per cent., and I presume that this is what you intended the public to understand.

Although it has been pointed out to you by a leading Manufacturer that this is not the case, I understand that you decline to withdraw your statement, or to furnish the source of your information.

I am in a position to know, and I can state positively, that the advance in price of carpets made by all leading British Carpet Manufacturers is 10 per cent. and 10 per cent. only. Carpet Manufacturers are quite prepared to justify this advance in the proper quarters.

H. TOMKINSON,
Chairman of the Carpet Manufacturers' Association.

[Our figures came from an authoritative source and referred, as we said, to particular dealers. We are glad to hear that they do not apply to the Manufacturers Association. As to the Statement that we refused to withdraw, the facts are simple. When the request was made we at once offered to publish any letter sent.—ED. *N.S. & N.*]

THEATRES IN WARTIME

SIR,—I have read with the greatest interest Mr. Desmond MacCarthy's article "The theatre during the last war," in which he gives instances of plays of the highest dramatic and literary value being produced then. May I be permitted to add that it was not only London audiences who supported plays of this quality. Until I joined the army in 1915, I had, with Miss Kirsteen Graeme, the privilege of touring a repertory of plays by Shaw, Galsworthy, Wilde, Pinero, Barker, Ibsen, Verhaeren, Andreiev. We had seasons of three or four weeks at Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, and Newcastle-on-Tyne. It was during this tour that the first performance of *Man and Superman* in its entirety, the first performance in English of Verhaeren's *Cloister*, Andreiev's *Life of Man* and the first public performance in this country of Ibsen's *Ghosts* was given. On Saturday, September 2nd, 1939, when surely doubts and anxiety were at their acutest, I gave *Man and Superman* in its entirety (six hours performance) at the Alhambra, Glasgow, the largest theatre in that town, and we played to capacity. This, I think, destroys the validity of the opinion so many hold, that only the lightest, not to say the most trivial, theatrical fare is wanted and appreciated in time of war. S. ESMÉ PERCY

Savage Club,
1 Carlton House Terrace, S.W.1.

DESIGN IN BLACK-OUTS

SIR,—Our streets are suffering every day from black-out hangover. Our protective measures, strips of paper, drab boarding, generally in dull colours, are making our shopping streets dismal. We have lost the lights of London; but some attempt should be made to efface the effects of the black-out by day. There are hundreds of able artists and designers in this country, and shopkeepers might turn protection to good account by employing competent people to decorate their defences. The plate glass window may have given way to peepholes cut in boarding, but there is no reason why the surface of boarding, and even paper strips pasted on windows, should not be invigorated with appropriate decoration, and derive benefit from colour and interest from pattern. This would lift depression from our shopping streets, and might well stimulate business.

40 Dover Street, W.1.

M. L. ANDERSON,
Organising Secretary, Design and Industries Association.
T. A. FENNEMORE,
Registrar, National Register of Industrial Art Designers.
JOHN GLOAG.

VERMINOUS CHILDREN

SIR,—References to verminous evacuees continue to decorate the daily and weekly press. So far only once have I seen even a faint recognition that this condition may not be entirely the fault of the evacuees, namely in your London Diary for September 23rd: "This of course happened," says Critic, "because the war began in the holidays before the Medical Officer had a chance to deal with the usual slum diseases." Very thoughtless of Hitler, of course. But why, in Hippocrates' name, should the M.O. cease to deal with the "usual slum diseases" (what a revealing phrase) just because the children are not at school—for I take the reference to be to school holidays, not to those of the M.O.? Surely the whole point of the situation is NOT that verminous and infectious children were brought into the homes of the better-to-do but that they have been allowed to remain so in their own homes, that our health and education services are in a mess, and that this is what you get if you keep people in bad houses and give them bad food. E. M. HUGH-JONES

Parrott's,
Wootton by Woodstock,
Oxford.

HECTOR TO CASSANDRA

SIR,—

The things you long foretold have come;
Death lifts his bulk against the sky.
Now let your oracles be dumb.
You need not teach us how to die.

THEO JESSUP

WHITE'S SELBORNE

". . . there is somewhat in most genera at least, that at first sight discriminates them, and enables a judicious observer to pronounce upon them with some certainty." Gilbert White is talking, of course about birds; the good ornithologist, he says, should be able to distinguish them by their air—" on the ground as well as on the wing, and in the bush as well as in the hand." But when the bird happens to be Gilbert White himself, when we try to discriminate the colour and shape of this very rare fowl, we are at a loss. Is he, like the bird so brightly coloured by hand as a frontispiece to the second volume, a hybrid—something between a hen that clucks and a nightingale that sings? It is one of those ambiguous books that seem to tell a plain story, the *Natural History of Selborne*, and yet by some apparently unconscious device of the author's has a door left open, through which we hear distant sounds, a dog barking, cart wheels creaking, and see, when " all the fading landscape sinks in night," if not Venus herself at least a phantom owl.

His intention seems plain enough—it was to impart certain observations upon the fauna and flora of his native village to his friends Thomas Pennant and Daines Barrington. But it was not for the benefit of those gentlemen that he composed the sober yet stately description of Selborne with which the book opens. There it is before us, the village of Selborne, lying in the extreme eastern corner of the county of Hampshire, with its hanger and its sheep walks and those deep lanes " that affright the ladies and make timid horsemen shudder." The soil is part clay, part malm; the cottages are of stone or brick; the men work in the hop gardens and in the spring and summer the women weed the corn. No novelist could have opened better. Selborne is set solidly in the foreground. But something is lacking; and so before the scene fills with birds, mice, voles, crickets and the Duke of Richmond's moose, before the page is loud with the chirpings, bleatings, lowings and gruntings of their familiar intercourse, we have Queen Anne lying on the bank to watch the deer driven past. It was an anecdote, he casually remarks, that he had from an old keeper, Adams, whose great-grandfather, father and self were all keepers in the forest. And thus the single straggling street is allied with history, and shaded by tradition. No novelist could have given us more briefly and completely all that we need to know before the story begins.

The story of Selborne is a vegetable, an animal story. The gossip is about the habits of vipers and the love interest is supplied chiefly by frogs. Compared with Gilbert White the most realistic of novelists is a rash romantic. The crop of the cuckoo is examined; the viper is dissected; the grasshopper is sought with a pliant grass blade in its hole; the mouse is measured and found to weigh one copper halfpenny. Nothing can exceed the minuteness of these observations, or the scrupulous care with which they are conducted. The chief question in dispute—it is indeed the theme of the book—is the migration of swallows. Barrington believed that the swallow sleeps out the winter; White, who has a nephew in Andalusia to inform him, now inclines to migration; then draws back. Every grain of evidence is sifted; none is obscured. With all his faculties bent on this great question, the image of science at her most innocent and most sincere, he loses that self-consciousness which so often separates us from our fellow-creatures and becomes like a bird seen through a field-glass busy in a distant hedge. This is the moment then, when his eyes are fixed upon the swallow, to watch Gilbert White himself.

We observe in the first place the creature's charming simplicity. He is quite indifferent to public opinion. He will transplant a colony of crickets to his lawn; imprison one in a paper cage on his table; bawl through a speaking trumpet at his bees—they remain indifferent; and arrive at Selborne with Aunt Snookes aged tortoise seated beside him in the post chaise. And while thus engaged he emits those little chuckles of delight, those half-conscious burblings and comments which make him as " amusive " as one of his own birds. ". . . But their inequality of height," he muses, pondering the abortive match between the moose and the red deer, " must always have been a bar to any commerce of an amorous kind." " The copulation of frogs," he observes, " is notorious to everybody . . . and yet I never saw, or read, of toads being observed in the same situation." " Pitiable seems the condition of this poor embarrassed reptile," he laments over the tortoise, yet " there is a season (usually the beginning of June) when the tortoise walks on tip-toe " along the garden path in search of love.

And just as the vicarage garden seemed to Aunt Snookes tortoise a whole world, so as we look through the eyes of Gilbert White England becomes immense. The South Downs, across which he rides year after year, turn to " a vast range of mountains." The country is very empty. He is more solitary at Selborne than a peasant to-day in the remotest Hebrides. It is true that he has—he is proud of the fact—a nephew in Andalusia; but he has no acquaintance at present among the gentlemen of the Navy; and though London and Bath exist, of course—London indeed boasts a very fine collection of horns—rumours from those capitals come very slowly across wild moors and roads which the snow has made impassable. In this quiet air sounds are magnified. We hear the whisper of the grasshopper lark; the caw of rooks is like a pack of hounds " in hollow, echoing woods "; and on a still summer evening the Portsmouth gun booms out just as the goat-sucker begins its song. His mind, like the bird's crop that the farmer's wife found stuffed with vegetables and cooked for her dinner, has nothing but insects in it and tender green shoots. This innocent, this unconscious happiness is conveyed, not by assertion, but much more effectively by those unsought memories that come of their own accord unsought. They are all of hot summer evenings—at Oxford in Christ Church quadrangle; riding from Richmond to Sunbury with the swallows skimming the river. Even the strident voice of the cricket, so discordant to some, fills his mind " with a train of summer ideas, of everything that is rural, verdurous and joyful." There is a continuity in his happiness; the same thoughts recur on the same occasions. " I made the same remark in former years as I came the same way annually." Year after year he was thinking of the swallows.

But the landscape in which this bird roams so freely has its hedges. They shut in, but they protect. There is what he calls, so aptly, Providence. Church spires, he remarks, " are very necessary ingredients in the landscape." Providence dwells there—inscrutable, for why does it allot so many years to Aunt Snookes tortoise? But all-wise—consider the legs of the frog—" How wonderful is the economy of Providence with regard to the limbs of so vile an animal! " In another fifty years Providence would have been neither so inscrutable nor so wise—it would have lost its shade. But Providence about 1760 was in its prime; it sets all doubts at rest, and so leaves the mind free to question practically everything. Besides Providence there are the castles and seats of the nobility. He respects them almost equally. The old families —the Howes, the Mordaunts—know their places and keep the poor in theirs. Gilbert White is far less tender to the poor—" We abound with poor," he writes, as if the vermin were beneath his notice—than to the grasshopper whom he lifts out of its hole so carefully and once inadvertently squeezed to death. Finally, shading the landscape with its august laurel, is literature—Latin literature, naturally. His mind is haunted by the classics. He sounds a Latin phrase now and then as if to tune his English. The echo that was so famous a feature of Selborne seems of its own accord to boom out " Tityre, tu patulae recubans . . . " It was with Virgil in his mind that Gilbert White described the women making rush candles at Selborne.

So we observe through our field-glasses this very fine specimen of the eighteenth-century clerical naturalist. But just as we think to have got him named he moves. He sounds

a note that is not the characteristic note of the common English clergyman. "When I hear fine music I am haunted with passages therefrom night and day; and especially at first waking, which by their importunity, give me more uneasiness than pleasure." Why does music, he asks, "so strangely affect some men, as it were by recollection, for days after a concert is over?"

It is a question that sends us baffled to his biography. But we learn only what we knew already—that his affection for Kitty Mulso was not passionate; that he was born at Selborne in 1720 and died there in 1793; and that his "days passed with scarcely any other vicissitudes than those of the seasons." But one fact is added—a negative, but a revealing fact; there is no portrait of him in existence. He has no face. That is why perhaps he escapes identification. His observation of the insect in the grass is minute; but he also raises his eyes to the horizon and looks and listens. In that moment of abstraction he hears sounds that make him uneasy in the early morning; he escapes from Selborne, from his own age, and comes winging his way to us in the dusk along the hedgerows. A clerical owl? A parson with the wings of a bird? A hybrid? But his own description fits him best. "The kestrel or wind-hover," he says, "has a peculiar mode of hanging in the air in one place, his wings all the time being briskly agitated."

VIRGINIA WOOLF

NEW NOVELS

The Red Centaur. By MARJORIE MACK. *Faber.* 7s. 6d.
Fiesta in Manhattan. By CHARLES KAUFMAN. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.
Yesterday's Dreams. By RUTH FEINER. *Dakers.* 8s. 6d. (*publication on Oct. 4th.*).
The Sea Tower. By HUGH WALPOLE. *Macmillan.* 7s. 6d.
Mona Sheehy. By LORD DUNSANY. *Heinemann.* 7s. 6d.

The total recall of two summer holidays spent by a little girl at a house near Dinard is not to be valued by everyday standards. Against them it would be valueless like those sea-polished stones, or feathers, or the old-fashioned sort of glass marble, or any of the things one likes to pick up and take pleasure in for a moment. *The Red Centaur* possesses the trivial beauty of these little things, a placid clarity and simplicity that make it extremely enjoyable. The story is nothing, the little girl's English family make friends with a French family whose summer villa stands across the bay on the top of a hill. The heads of each family are yachtsmen and they signal across the bay to each other with flags, arranging picnics and outings. The next year a newcomer has built a house overlooking the Englishman's which has rights on his private beach, the place is not the same. The French family is not the same; their daughter has been married by arrangement, during the summer her lover is killed in a hunting accident. There are strains and awkwardnesses and the Fashoda incident is in full swing. The English family sell their house, they will not go back another year. And yet this piece of idle gossip is so skilfully put together that it is interesting and satisfying. Its secret is the preservation of the innocent eye after the brain has matured, the apparently artless simplicity is the product of clear thinking and very skilful writing. This enjoyable first novel is more than promising, for it presents an assured talent, witty and capable of conveying a genuine sentiment which is not sentimentality. People who enjoy Anatole France's delightful stories about Pierre Nozière should enjoy Miss Mack's book for it has many of their virtues.

Fiesta in Manhattan, on the other hand, is a promising first novel, and its promise is of a long series of increasingly competent novels and short stories which will appear in the *Saturday Evening Post* and the *Strand* before reaching book form. Superficial, smart, and technically slick, the book is the antithesis of Miss Mack's and it is almost everything a work of art should not be. It is a story of Mexican immigrants who make a conspicuous failure of life in New York, and the story of their misapprehensions and difficulties might be credible if one could accept, as the author would appear to, the thesis that all persons of darker skins are just big children. On the dust jacket Mr. R. C. Hutchinson has not the smallest hesitation in calling it a work of art: "I shall regard the book's fortunes as something of a test of public taste," he adds. It is no true test, the conclusion is foregone, this is the first appearance of a future best seller—in America if not here—and one can say with certainty that Mr. Kaufman has come into the literary world with a silver spoon in his mouth. *Yesterday's Dreams* belongs in the same department of literature's many mansions, magazine-stuff, readable and undisturbing. It is destined to popularity and a big sale. The story deals with a family of actors in pre-war and pre-Nazi Berlin. Their quarrels with each other and with the world are given the tender attention that the member of a family might give to family gossip. The story is as important as the story of *The Red Centaur*, but it isn't difficult to see why the book is so much less interesting. One of the things Miss Mack shares with France is an intelligent and profound philosophy in the light of which her trivia acquire a virtue they do not in themselves possess. Her Laurel is in a sense all children perceiving the splendours and miseries of the world into which they are entering, whereas the empty-headed dummies of Miss Feiner and Mr. Kaufman float on their special problems in a flitterwitted nowhere.

The same desire for greater frankness comes to one in connection with *The Sea Tower*. It's all awfully nice; the sealyham called Snubs and the spaniels, the big armchairs covered in rose damask and the lacquer screens; they all belong in an 1830 house by the sea. And there can be no doubt that the author is no end cultured; the book is replete with literary references, of the most cultured sort—James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Aldous Huxley, Mauriac, Montherlant, Colette, Marthe Bibesco, Jean Giono, Conrad, Jane Austen. He is a gentleman with a gentleman's tastes, and the book is written with a consciousness of this. It has an ease about it of the sort which in legend belongs to aristocrats (as well it might, for the dust jacket tells one that the Herries novels are now bought by the public "half-bound in grained forrel, with gilt tops, 20s. per vol."). But whereas the aristocrat in his confidence polishes off a kipper in a public restaurant without embarrassment or wears old clothes without shame, Sir Hugh sits down and writes almost the sort of thing that is to be bought in Green Street in a paper cover. The story flows on for a time about a mother who is jealous of her sons and who is upset when one leaves home without saying goodbye and another marries a girl she has never seen. But the psychological study of the relations between the

SIGMUND FREUD

★ *The Hogarth Press* and *The Institute of Psycho-Analysis* publish the works of this great pioneer of modern thought who died last week, an exile from Nazi intolerance, in our country.

★ Moses and Monotheism (8s. 6d.), his last book to appear, was a major event of the Spring publishing season this year.

★ The essential works for the study of Freud are his Collected Papers in four volumes (4 gns. the set).

★ The other works published in the *International Psycho-Analytical Library* are Beyond the Pleasure Principle (6s.), Group Psychology (7s. 6d.), The Ego and the Id (6s.), The Future of an Illusion (6s.), Civilization and its Discontents (6s.), New Introductory Lectures (10s. 6d.), An Autobiographical Study (6s.), and Inhibitions, Symptoms and Anxiety (6s.).

★ There are also two excellent short epitomes of his most important work in the Psycho-Analytical Epitomes, A General Selection (5s.) and Civilization, War and Death (3s. 6d.).

SIGMUND FREUD

young wife and the mother takes charge—or something takes charge—and we end up with a sweating and partially naked lesbian holding down the naked young wife in front of a huge fire while the mother-in-law picks up the red-hot fire-irons . . . it adds piquance, don't you think, that the young wife should be pregnant? No amount of culture buttered on to "those little lemon biscuits that Polchester alone in all the world can provide" can conceal what is going on here.

The Story of Mona Sheehy is a psychological study of a witch sticky with Irish charm. The psychological study by itself is a piece of work of great strength and subtlety but it rests on a foundation which is weak and irritating. The explanation of the witch's origin is not quite credible and a sight too charming, so that the wholly plausible account of the way in which the village and the girl herself come to believe in her supernatural origin is weakened. And when at the end of the story everything has led up to the tragedy it would be in real life and the wall falls open to admit of a happy ending with the patent unreality of a musical comedy *finale*, the effect is of a piece of stuff in which one cannot pick holes but which can be unravelled from the ends. This book, alas, is a falling between two stools; the poetic realism of *Up in the Hills* will not mix into the same vessel which holds a fairy story like *The Curse of the Wise Woman*. Readers will be happier with either of those pleasant books which are entities for one thing and for another do not lay on charm with the careless trowel wielded here with such chilling effect. ANTHONY WEST

A VICTORIAN SOPHIST

Walter Bagehot. By WILLIAM IRVINE. *Longmans.* 12*s.* 6*d.*

Everyone has his own pet criterion of select intelligence; and since mine is a proper appreciation of *The English Constitution* I opened Mr. Irvine's study of Walter Bagehot with keen anticipation. Not only did I want to know more about my Victorian hero; I was also curious to learn what an American professor would make of him.

Unfortunately, the answer is—not very much. Mr. Irvine's speciality is English and he suggests that, although Bagehot was a man of several professions, his vocation was literary criticism. With academic thoroughness he analyses the essays on Wordsworth, Milton, Shelley and Hartley Coleridge which Bagehot contributed to various periodicals while he was still in his twenties and, after solemnly discussing his theological position, comes to the conclusion:

> Bagehot is in some respects a sounder, and certainly a more modern, thinker than Newman, yet his religious works, I need scarcely say, will be much less remembered.

After this, two short chapters suffice to polish off *The English Constitution*, *Physics and Politics* and *Lombard Street*.

The truth is that Bagehot was not, in Mr. Irvine's sense of the word, a literary critic at all. Growing up when the Romantic movement was at its height, he found the spiritual rebellion which adolescence needs where John Stuart Mill found it, in the romantic poetry of Wordsworth and Shelley. At London University in the 1840's, students quoted the Romantics as their successors of the 1930's quoted Marx, in order to shock their elders and prove their emancipation. Just as Economics in the last ten years has been *the* revolutionary study, so literary criticism was in Bagehot's youth. He only threw his heart into it so long as books were his only experience, and before he found himself in the world of finance and politics. By treating the literary and religious essays as the centre of his work, Mr. Irvine has given an absurdly lopsided picture of Bagehot's significance.

All the same, *Walter Bagehot* is worth reading, if only because it contains a number of quotations from his lesser works. This son of a solid Somersetshire banker, studying before he is ten the Greek Testament with his imbecile half-brother under the guidance of a mother whose gaiety and charm was marred by violent fits of melancholia, is a fascinating and elusive figure. From his earliest years he is an *enfant terrible*, shocking his elders by his ingenuous scepticism, and then reassuring them by his pert morality and caustic destruction of half-baked progressive ideas. You cannot place him safely in any set: he has breakfast with Crabb Robinson in company with Arthur Hugh Clough, but in the evening he is discussing metaphysics with the Unitarian philosopher Martineau, and next day is writing of Clough.

> He has written a good deal of poetry; a proportion of which is good, though he unfortunately has been in the Highlands and talks of barmaids and potato-girls and other operative females there in a very humiliating way. . . . His mind is defective in moral feeling and in the conception of law generally as applied to morals.

A prig? But at 25 he is in France when Napoleon III makes his *coup d'état* and reports for that solemn Unitarian paper *The Enquirer*:

> Napoleon was far better prepared for the duties of a statesman by gambling on the turf than he would have been by poring over the historical and political dissertations of the good,

and defends the Third Empire with the argument that the French are far too clever a people to rule themselves. If this is a prig, he is at least not a solemn one; if he exudes a Victorian morality, he glows with a most sophistic wit.

With this word, sophist, we come near to an understanding of Walter Bagehot. The supercilious young *littérateur*, who at the age of 25 settled down in the family bank, married the daughter of James Wilson and, in 1861, succeeded his father-in-law as editor of *The Economist*, was by nature neither a Victorian pundit nor a Victorian rebel. In practical life he was a sensible man of affairs and an influential adviser of Liberal Governments, but in the realm of ideas he was that rare thing, a Tory iconoclast. With the ruthless analytical powers of a James Mill, he combined an ironic suspicion of Progress and everything connected with it. As conservative in his philosophy as Burke, he defended his conservatism with arguments in which Marx would have delighted. To him nothing was sacred, neither the will of the people nor the dignity of the Crown, neither the conclusions of the intellect nor the voice of conscience. All the principles of the Tory and the democrat were subjected to the same ironic examination, exposed as prejudices and then left precisely as they were. Both in his writings and in his life, Bagehot remained the ironic spectator, exploding every enthusiasm, and bidding those in power to see to it that they kept their power so that he might keep his position.

The great conservative philosophers have always had a streak of romanticism in them: the great radicals a hatred of superstition, and a respect for reason. Bagehot became a conservative rationalist. He exposed superstition only to prove its utility; proved the supreme excellence of dull stupidity, and used his reason to make rationalists look fools. In Aristophanes' words, he made the worse appear the better cause, and perversely added that it really was better.

> What we opprobriously call stupidity, though not an enlivening quality in common society, is Nature's favourite resource for preserving steadiness of conduct and consistency of opinion. . . . The best security for people's doing their duty is that they should not know anything else to do; the best security for fixedness of opinion is that people should be incapable of comprehending what is to be said on the other side.

Mr. Irvine writes, "Bagehot steadfastly sees men as they are," and in so doing falls into the error of confusing the debunker and the realist. Few writers have been so wilfully misleading as Walter Bagehot. *The English Constitution* is not a sober analysis of actual institutions but a masterpiece of special pleading. Purporting to strip off the illusions and show government in all its nakedness, it strips off most of the reality with the illusions, and leaves a machine for preserving the rich in their riches with no more resemblance to parliamentary institutions than its Marxist counterpart. Mr. Irvine should have been warned by Bagehot's political misadventures. The English banker who suffers four electoral defeats does not know everything about the art of politics.

There is a kind of man who proclaims his will to destroy all the illusions which conceal truth, and so enjoys the destruction of illusion that he forgets the truth behind it. Bagehot belonged to this kind. He saw through the illusions of his neighbours and never noticed that he himself was not only without illusions but without beliefs. He could make excellent fun of Disraeli and Dr. Arnold, but he failed to realise that an unromantic conservative is a man without principles. If we "see men steadfastly as they are" we cannot, unless we are criminals, wish them to remain in this unpleasant condition.

This of course does not detract from Bagehot's pre-eminence as a writer on politics, politicians and the art of government. The sophists were great teachers just because of their sophistry. They taught the wicked to be more skilfully wicked and the virtuous to temper their enthusiasm with worldly prudence. *The Melian Dialogue* does not say the whole truth about the Athenian Empire, but it says a half-truth with a dialectical skill which persuades the superficial pupil and challenges the outraged to a reply. Bagehot performed the same task for the Victorian age. The sage of Lombard Street, with his ironical praise of stupidity and ceremonial ballyhoo, can hardly have strengthened

FORTHCOMING BOOKS

October 5th

OLD POSSUM'S BOOK OF PRACTICAL CATS by T. S. Eliot. MOZART: THE WONDER BOY, a companion volume to BACH described on this page. WILD GEESE OVERHEAD by Neil Gunn. ST. CLAIR DONALDSON by C. T. Dimont, D.D., and F. de Witt Batty. THE YOGA SYSTEM OF HEALTH by Yogi Vithaldas.

October 12th

THE BIRD TALISMAN by Henry Wedgwood. THE TRAVELS OF MAURICE by Alice Coats, author of *The Story of Horace*. ALWAYS A LITTLE FURTHER by Alistair Borthwick. A SURGEON'S DESTINY, the sequel to *The Healing Knife*, by George Sava. LET ME GO BACK by Winifred Peck.

★ Warfare — LUDWIG RENN

Or *The Relation of War to Society*. Written primarily for the layman by a brilliant author and fine soldier, who had experience in the Great War and the Spanish War. Strategy, tactics and weapons are examined from earliest times to the present. More fascinating than 9 out of 10 novels. *Now ready.* 8*s.* 6*d.*

★ New Verse

An anthology edited by GEOFFREY GRIGSON, who has selected the most important poetry which has appeared in *New Verse* since its beginning. A vital record of development and achievement, with many informal photographs and short biographies of the contributors. 6*s.*

★ Orion Marches — MICHAEL ROBERTS

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one conservative in his faith. It is the radical, whom Bagehot so detested, that sharpens his wit upon *The English Constitution*, and borrows from the sceptical Tory the arguments for his revolutionary faith. RICHARD COVENTRY

WHERE DONS DELIGHT

Orion Marches. Poems by MICHAEL ROBERTS. *Faber and Faber.* 6s.

The Turning Path. By RONALD BOTTRALL. *Arthur Barker.* 5s.

Sonnets. In Exitu Israel. Peace: an Ode. By E. H. W. MEYERSTEIN. *Oxford.* 5s.

Huntsman, What Quarry? By EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY. *Hamilton.* 6s.

I Have Seen Monsters and Angels. By EUGÈNE JOLAS. *Transition Press.*

The Road is Wider Than Long. By ROLAND PENROSE. *London Gallery Editions.* 2s. 6d.

Pedagogy has cast a dead hand on better poetry than any contained in these volumes. Jonson, Milton, Keats, Tennyson, Bridges, all freeze in patches with a learning which remains as a block of ice floating on their work. Therefore to say that the dons conduct a ghostly dance through the pages of Mr. Roberts, Mr. Bottrall and Mr. Meyerstein, is not as condemnatory as it sounds. Few qualities are less poetic than donnishness, yet good poetry can stand a dose of it, in English and Latin at all events.

The sad story of Mr. Ronald Bottrall has a moral for all young poets which I beg them to learn. It is that if before you have attained your majority, you find that the eye of Professor Richards, or Dr. Leavis, or Mr. Grigson, is fixed on you with a kind of glassy approval, hit out with all your strength and stick your fist into it, for you are in a very bad way indeed and desperate remedies are necessary if you are to be saved from trekking to the Far East, to Tokyo and Hyderabad, to forget Cambridge and Hampstead. When Mr. Bottrall was still an undergraduate, Dr. Leavis wrote a book called *New Bearings in Modern Poetry*, in which he quoted Bottrall as the great hope of modern poetry. Poor Mr. Bottrall laboured long under the necessity of being the Cambridge don's idea of the modern poet. In every poem it was necessary to introduce Contemporary Sensibility, Influences, Mr. Eliot, Mr. Pound, and a Sense of the Tradition. In a desperate attempt to escape from the gown of Dr. Leavis, Mr. Bottrall has plunged for the skirts of Miss Laura Riding. The present book has a letter from Mr. Graves ("What strikes me about your poems is the great play they make with the notion of hell"), and it is dedicated to Miss Riding. Nevertheless, the last poems do show an attempt to break away from a clogging literary self-consciousness, and they contain some brilliant and striking imagery. Mr. Bottrall is always serious, though often over-earnest.

Mr. Roberts has his donnish moments, but he has an intelligent and interesting mind. His poems are inclined to be dry, and they lack the sense of rhythmic compulsion, but they are convincing because they state situations which are obviously real to Mr. Roberts and not forced on him from outside. There is a simplicity and directness about these poems which gives what they say a significance which, perhaps, as poetry, they lack. The conflict expressed in *Under the Eye of Heaven*, and in *Dionysos*, does not strike one as finding its inevitable form in the poetry which Mr. Roberts has written. Yet it is so genuine and important and so intelligently stated that one is grateful for what Mr. Roberts has to say, however he expresses it. Moreover, his poems do contain good lines, and *The Green Lake* is both true observation and a genuine poetic experience. As a poet, Mr. Roberts is best when he writes poetic parables which have a dryness and force of anti-climax which one finds in translations from the Chinese. However, the East is also inclined to release all the donnishness in him, especially in the long *Chinghis Khan*.

> Tchirek River runs
> Under the Dark Mountain
> Where the sky is like the sides of a tent
> Stretched down over the Great Steppe.

Now who could write like this unless he felt that Oriental Study gives one a passport to get away with such lines, which no ignorant reader would ever dare challenge?

Mr. Roberts is not pedantic like the Leavises, he is the modern student, with something of the earnestness of the Christian Student as well. With Mr. Meyerstein we are back amongst the dons of an older day, and I am afraid that his sonnets rarely emerge from the grip of their learned poeticisms.

> This leaf-crowned limestone was a Cypriot,
> Who into Golgos or Idalium,
> Loyal to Aphrodite's fane, would come
> In reverential speed, his sandals hot,
> His chiton with the noontide ardour shot,
> To poise a wreath against a pillar's drum, etc.

we read. It is a pity, because when Mr. Meyerstein is less of the lone devotee of loveliness, he writes far better than this and shows a very interesting personality and greater strength of feeling than the other poets under review. *In Exitu Israel* is a fierce, half satiric, half loving poem about the condition of Jewry to-day, expressed with real power:

> But the eternal Psyche that we bear,
> The lava'd moth within our creeping shapes,
> Never takes wing, while torments everywhere
> Contract our visionary brows to apes.

After this we take a plunge down several storeys with Miss Millay, whose poetry is like glittering Selfridge's ground floor, if it avoids the remainders and Bargain Basement of Mr. Penrose's muse. "Huntsman, What Quarry?" asks Miss Millay, "To tame or to destroy?" And the answer comes back pat "To destroy." She expresses decent feelings with an incredible smoothness and ease, as though despair about Czechoslovakia ("If there were balm in Gilead, I would go. To Gilead for your wounds, unhappy land,") could be coated over with sugar. These poems make easy reading, and one closes the book feeling how right Miss Millay is when she claims "No earthly enterprise will cloud this vision." And how easy it all seems!

Mr. Jolas is an American who spent his childhood in Europe, and suffers from the misfortune of having to write in three languages A few lines of English are followed by a few lines of French which are followed by a few lines of German. It is like a nervous tick. He is unfortunate, but he is not, as he seems to think, discovering a new language with James Joyce. The basis of Joyce's experiments with language is the fact that he is so deeply rooted in the Irish gab, that he can absorb any number of foreign words and influences without losing that fundamental rhythm. Jolas's poems are jerky imagist writing, the same in all three languages.

The Road is Wider than Long is a ninny book. It is set in all sorts of different kinds of type, printed in black and red, and bound in wood. A great deal of credit goes to the printers and binders, but none at all to Mr. Penrose, whose poems and photographs are pretentious and dull. STEPHEN SPENDER

A GUIDE TO NEW YORK

New York City Guide. Prepared by the Federal Writers' Project of the Work's Progress Administration in New York City. *Constable.* 12s. 6d.

This book is a hotch-potch. But then, so is the city it sets out to describe—built in every sort of architectural style from Byzantine and thirteenth-century Gothic to the severely modern, of every kind of material from clapboard and brownstone to glass and ferro-concrete—inhabited by a dozen different races with no community of religion, tradition or feeling. It is a city, moreover, that is neither of the land nor of the sea—not founded, like older cities, on resilient *humus*, but dug into naked volcanic rock which rings hollowly underfoot as you tread its pavements. Now its climate is intolerably hot, now insufferably cold. Hurricanes roar through its draughty crevices: sudden snowstorms descend as from a massacre of feather-beds and turn passers-by into fumbling and groping snowmen: or the sunshine is as brilliant as the air is biting. In August, the whole metropolis sweats and steams, and grey mists blanket the tops of the skyscrapers, while waves of damp heat mount from the oozing sidewalks. Its public and its private life are on the same extravagant scale. An American Legion parade may block its main thoroughfares for days together.

New Yorkers hate and admire their preposterous background. They will inform you, with a certain romantic complaisance, that such-and-such a fashionable night club is run exclusively by gangsters; that no woman should trust herself after dark in a taxi-cab—it is quite probable that she will be raped when she is crossing Central Park; or they will expatiate on the dangers of visiting "clip-joints." One is surprised that so few competent modern novels should have been devoted to the intricacies of New York, though it is as corrupt and luxurious and entertaining as the Rome described by Juvenal or Petronius, and twice as strange as the Paris of Eugène Sue. Here, at all events, is an exhaustive and well-informed, if unequal and untidily written, guide-book. *New York City Guide* is a Federal Writers' Project, composed

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under the aegis of the W.P.A. The effects of literary collaboration have not always been fortunate. Some sections descend to the dullest guide-book banality—

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Others drop abruptly into house-agent's jargon :

> Flatbush is one of Brooklyn's most desirable residential neighbourhoods. It extends south of Prospect Park to King's Highway, between Nostrand and McDonald Avenues. A few Colonial homes still remain . . . Roomy homes, with spacious front porches, are separated by lawns and privet hedges.

But there are many passages of imaginative and witty writing.

The essential oddity of New York appears in every chapter. It is inescapable. Do not the splendours of Park Avenue—perched on stilts over the subterranean railway tracks of Grand Central Station—dwindle at length into one of the city's most notorious slums : so that it is a question of a digit more or less in your street-number whether you live at your ease among the millionaires in a region of glittering flower shops and gigantic apartment-houses, or frequent a different breed of cut-throats in Spanish Harlem ? A short taxi-ride will whisk you from one to the other. New York is democratic in that sense alone : the frontiers between wealth and poverty are still extraordinarily nebulous.

As easy reading, the guide cannot be recommended. The reader, nevertheless, who likes to pick and choose—particularly if he has visited New York on his own account and has suffered from and enjoyed its climate and whisky—will find something to distract his attention upon every page. Perhaps he may refer to the districts he has walked through. The Bowery has lost a good deal of its riotous interest. " Once an Indian trail used by aborigines in their expeditions against New Amsterdam " and, in the time of the Dutch, known as the road to the *bouwerij* or farm, it became successively a famous theatrical centre and a gangster neighbourhood, celebrated for " fake auction rooms, saloons specialising in five-cent whisky and knockout drops, sensational dime museums, filthy and rat-ridden stale-beer dives." To-day (write the authors of the *New York City Guide*) it is " chiefly given over to pawnshops, restaurant equipment houses, beer saloons, and miscellaneous small retail shops. Here flop-houses offer a bug-infested bed in an unventilated pigeon-hole for twenty-five cents a night, restaurants serve ham and eggs for ten cents, and students in barber ' colleges ' cut hair for fifteen cents. Thousands of the nation's unemployed drift to this section and may be seen sleeping in all-night restaurants, in doorways, or on loading platforms, furtively begging, or waiting with hopeless faces for some breadline or free lodging house to open." It is an inferno of pallid and gritty wretchedness—no European slum could be more drably desperate : for most European slums have an inherited character—and resounds to the incessant racket of the elevated railway.

Federal writers also do well by the East Side and Coney Island. The East Side—that great swarming Jewish settlement, packed to suffocation with the *detritus* of the Old World—has proved an invaluable forcing-house of American talent :

> Unionism, anarchism, capitalism, socialism, and communism have been thoroughly discussed in the streets and parks of the East Side . . . Anarchist and socialist papers and periodicals, some short-lived, others continuing to exist for many years, have been issued in many languages . . . A lunch hour at a garment factory would find many of the workers absorbed in Tolstoy, Kropotkin, or Heine. Maeterlinck, Hauptmann, Sudermann, Gorky . . . had their American premières in the ghetto. While Broadway was receiving Ibsen coldly, the East Side was enthusiastically applauding Nazimova in *Ghosts* . . . Jo Davidson and Jacob Epstein . . . are from the East Side . . . Jazz owes much to the district where George and Ira Gershwin and Irving Berlin started their careers.

New York's suburban environs have not been neglected. There are long, sometimes unnecessarily long, accounts of those " desirable " residential neighbourhoods which rival Balham, Purley or Penge in dreariness ; and there are references to the city's odder sea-side purlieus—the low, marshy islands of Jamaica Bay, where crazy catwalks connect flimsy wooden houses built above the mud (without benefit of fresh water, gas or electric light—and to half-derelict townships, once prosperous bathing places. Very few Londoners know the whole of London. To become acquainted with the whole of New York would be a life-time's study.

Yet even the heart of the city is odd enough. Grand Central, for instance, is less a railway station as English readers understand the term—that is to say, a sooty glass and iron concave, with a few dark waiting rooms and fetid sandwich bars—than a metropolis complete in itself down to the smallest detail. It suggests a reconstruction of the Baths of Caracalla, vast, echoing, crowded. Direct lighting from the sky seldom penetrates : for it is one of the peculiarities of New York that so many functions can be performed completely under cover :

> Beneath the sidewalks of New York the subways have created a second city. Some of the thoroughfares between the turnstiles and the streets have lunch counters, barbershops, shoeshine stands, florist shops, 'phone booths. Through the use of these facilities the New Yorker could live a rather rounded life without once venturing into the street. He could . . . stay at the Commodore Hotel, transact business in the Chrysler Building, dine at the Café Savarin, shop at Bloomingdale's, swim in the indoor pool at the Hotel St. George in Brooklyn, see a movie . . . and . . . marry at the Municipal Building.

If he were unemployed, he could make the subway his rolling doss-house and nod round and round again, through the winter nights ; while his richer friends dined or danced on Fifty-Second Street. And in the process he might give New York the novel it needs : only an epic poem or a great novel could do it justice. The present guide book is a laborious but gallant production, full of good photographs and bad drawings and amusing scraps of knowledge.

PETER QUENNELL

THE WANDERING BOTANIST

Three Acres and a Mill. By ROBERT GATHORNE-HARDY. *Dent.* 15*s.*

Travel, agreeable enough for its own sake, becomes doubly enjoyable when undertaken with a complementary purpose. Mr. Gathorne Hardy, wanderer and botanist, is thus the ideal traveller. He likes " foreign parts " ; he enjoys the excitement of getting there ; he likes the unfamiliar things he sees and the alien characters he meets ; he likes the wines and the inns and the goat-paths and the caves ; he is unsophisticated enough to rejoice freely in them, yet sophisticated enough to express his pleasure in descriptive English. A boyish enthusiasm irradiates all the pages of a book so charmingly frank and personal that any outside comment seems irrelevant if not impertinent. Travel, to him, brings a richly stored mind, " memories," to quote his own words, " to turn over and contemplate, a beautiful, immaterial, unprinted book." He records his failures as candidly as his triumphs ; he loses three out of four campanulas ; has a bad head for heights, and records his dizziness with a frequency which betrays how much it worries and handicaps him ; is not ashamed of saying when he gets tired, hungry, or cross. The charm of his writing lies in this complete and personal candour ; in his love for the flowers of his quest ; and in his descriptive passages about the mountains and wild places where his ramblings have taken him.

They take him to the South of France, to Spain, Savoie, Teneriffe, and Iceland. Iceland appears to be the land of his predilection, but the passage which I most enjoyed was his account of climbing the Peak of Teneriffe, some ten pages which ought to find a place in all anthologies of mountaineering. He has the gift of making one share his excitement, his weariness, and the final conquest, whether it is the conquest of a mountain or the discovery of the sought-for flower. Farrer himself could not display a finer enthusiasm or a more precise botanical knowledge, though, true to himself throughout, when a plant baffles him Mr. Gathorne Hardy does not hesitate to say so.

It is agreeable to learn that some of the plants thus laboriously and lovingly collected now flourish in his own garden. He returns constantly between his journeys to the Berkshire mill, again taking us into his confidence as to failure or success. Though, as he says, he has made no spectacular excursions to such remote regions as the Himalayas or the Andes, the Alpine treasures he has brought home are just as dear to him, and his account leaves one hoping that in future days he may again find himself with his collecting-box on the slopes of the Pyrenees or El Teide.

V. SACKVILLE-WEST

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In the days ahead we are likely to forget China's struggle against an even more ruthless aggressor than Germany. Mr. Shepherd's excellent account of Sino-Japanese relations from 1894 until the present day should remind us that China has at least as great a claim upon us as Poland if we are in fact fighting to end the rule of force in international relations. No nation in modern times has ever been subjected to such constant pressure and merciless bullying as China at the hands of Japan. Mr. Shepherd shows how each concession to Japan's demands was followed by further demands and encroachments on Chinese sovereignty, until in 1937 Chiang Kai-shek announced that "the limits of endurance" had been reached. This book should serve as an invaluable source of reference to confute the Japanese lies and misrepresentations which, from constant repetition, have come to be believed by many people in England. The conciseness and clarity of the author's style and his judicial and unimpassioned presentation of the evidence make his indictment of Japan particularly valuable.

BOOKS TO COME

Most publishers seem now to have decided to go on with a full, or almost full, autumn list. In a week or so the season will be in full swing. The chief lack, perhaps, will be in imaginative writing, but I notice one book at any rate which is likely to be remarkable. *North Cape*, a description of trawler fishing in the North Sea, by F. D. Ommaney, is announced by Longmans for October 5th. Everyone who read his *South Latitude*, published last year—it was a book that might well have been awarded the Hawthornden Prize—will look forward to this new volume with excitement.

At a time when intelligent appreciation of the American attitude is so important, there should be a large public for *America in Midpassage*, a survey of the history of the United States during the last ten years by Charles A. Beard and Mary R. Beard, authors of *The Rise of American Civilisation*. Whilst this new book may be considered as rounding off the account of America's development given in its predecessor, it is complete in itself—a most timely study of modern American institutions and ideas. It will be published by Cape on October 6th.

For the same day, Cape announces *Mankind Set Free*, by Maurice Rowntree, an exposition of the principles of Quakerism and their present application; *The Loneliest Mountain*, W. H. Davies's last poems, postponed from the date previously announced; and *A Bonfire of Weeds*, another scarifying contribution from Beachcomber to the literature of self-ridicule.

Cassells will publish on October 5th Gerald Heard's important new book, *Pain, Sex and Time*, which is a companion volume to *The Third Morality*. It is an exposition of mankind's need of a new standard of behaviour. From the same house on this day comes *Claude Bernard—Physiologist*, by Dr. J. M. D. Olsted, an account of the great physiologist both as man and scientist.

Sir John Marriott's *Commonwealth or Anarchy* is promised by the Oxford University Press for early October. Its highly topical subject is the projects for perpetual peace made during the last four centuries considered with reference to the historical events which evoked them.

Another study of America, *The American Entente*, by Professor R. B. Mowat, is to be published by Arnold on October 5th. It is a retrospect of the problems of 150 years and the respective parts played in their solution by sentiment and practical political machinery. On the same day Arnold will publish *The Sport of a Lifetime*, by Eugene de Horthy, brother of the Regent of Hungary, an account, which promises to be amusing, of adventures in many lands; *Essays and Addresses*, by Oliver Elton; and *Music in the Modern World*, by R. H. Myers, who discusses the objects and aesthetic attitude of the modern composer.

A candid and entertaining biography, *Marie Corelli: The Life and Death of a Best-Seller*, is announced by Constable for October 6th. The author, George Bullock, has had access to material not hitherto available and is able to dispel the mystery of Marie Corelli's parentage and to furnish many fresh details of her intimate life.

On the same day, this firm will publish a new historical novel by Naomi Mitchison, *The Blood of the Martyrs*, in which Mrs. Mitchison returns to the Roman Empire, this time at the height of its totalitarian power under Nero.

Mr. William Holt personally published and sold by house-to-house canvassing three editions of his *Under a Japanese Parasol*. His autobiography, *I Haven't Unpacked*, will be published by Harrap on October 5th. Mr. Holt began his working life in a Todmorden shirt factory at the age of twelve. His occupations have included those of a weaver, tutor, soldier, coal-salesman, revolutionary, unemployed organiser and war correspondent. He has fought in a Japanese riot, taught languages in Berlin, been imprisoned after leading a mass march on Leeds Town Hall and run the Franco blockade.

Country Life anticipates a strong demand for books dealing with country subjects as a result of the evacuation scheme. They are publishing four sixpennies in a Home Front series: *Vegetable Growing*, *Fruit and Vegetable Preserving*, *Poultry Keeping on Small Lines* and *Rabbit Keeping*. For October 4th they announce *Old-Fashioned Flowers*, by Sacheverell Sitwell, with lithographs by John Farleigh.

The Cambridge University Press also expect that evacuation will have stimulated youthful curiosity about country manners and occupations. They have in hand several books which will help to satisfy this curiosity. One is *Village Life and Labour*, by Cecil G. Hutchinson and Frank Chapman, both English masters at Audenshaw Grammar School, which consists of extracts from writers including Jefferies, Adrian Bell, A. G. Street and H. E. Bates. Another is H. J. Massingham's *Country Relics*, a description of various tools now replaced by machinery. Yet another Cambridge book, *The Seasons and the Farmer*, by Dr. F. Fraser Darling, provides an account of farming as it is to-day.

A new biography by Francis Hackett, *Queen Anne Boleyn*, is due from Nicholson and Watson on October 5th. It is a novel, we are warned, and not history fictionised. This firm will publish on the same day *I Lost My English Accent*, by C. V. R. Thompson, yet another discovery of America, this time by a correspondent of the *Daily Express*.

Robert Flaherty's films have shown that he has a vivid pictorial imagination. His new novel, *White Master*, is based on his intimate knowledge of the Hudson Bay country in which his story is set. It comes from Routledge on October 6th, together with *Profits, Interest and Investment*, by F. A. von Hayek, a collection of essays of which the first, on industrial fluctuations, is a new one.

A disillusioned business man (writing under the name of Stephen Lister) who made a success of advertising but abandoned it in disgust, revolted by the part played in salesmanship by intrigue, false *bonhomie*, "friendly" lunches and free stalls, is the author of *Savoy Grill at One!* It will be published by Peter Davies on October 2nd.

The Human Machine, a study for art students of the workings of the human body in relation to its construction, illustrated by some 400 drawings, is due from the Bodley Head on October 3rd.

Macmillans announce for October 3rd a volume of autobiography by Miss Dormer Creston, author of *Andromeda in Wimpole Street* and of a recent Life of Marie Bashkirtseff. Her new book, *Enter a Child*, describes the fears and delights of a child brought up in a strict Victorian household in London and her escape afterwards to her uncle's walled garden in the garden. It is charmingly written in a series of detached scenes, and comes halfway between autobiography and fiction.

Correction: Mr. Hamish Hamilton points out that the author of *The Mirrors of Downing Street* alluded to last week was "The Gentleman with a Duster" and not "Ephesian."

MARIE SCOTT-JAMES

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Week-end Competitions

No. 503

Set by H. B. Mallalieu

Flaubert planned the "Dictionnaire des Idées Reçues." This was to be a collection, in alphabetical order, of accepted ideas on every subject, as: "BUSINESS: Always comes first.—A woman should avoid speaking of hers.—The most important thing in life.—Nothing else matters." The usual prizes are offered for the best extracts from a contemporary collection on these lines. Limit, 250 words.

COMPETITION No. 499

Set by Roger Marvell

One immediate result of war is a proliferation of Busybodies. A first prize of £2 2s. and a second prize of 10s. 6d. are offered for the best verses (not more than twelve lines) "Upon a Busybody."

The report on this competition will be held over. There has been a large entry, but some of those who have sent in verses could do better and others might like to enter who have so far abstained. The closing date will, therefore, be Friday, October 6.

RULES—

1. Envelopes should be marked with the number of the Problem, in the top left-hand corner, and should be addressed to COMPETITIONS, 10 Great Turnstile, High Holborn, W.C.1. Solutions must reach the Editor by first post on Friday, October 6th.
2. Competitors may use a pseudonym. Typescript is not insisted on, but writing must be on one side of the paper only.
3. The Editor's decision is final. He reserves the right to print in part or as a whole any matter sent in, whether it be awarded a prize or not. MSS. cannot be returned. When no entries reach the required standard no prize will be awarded.
4. No competitor is eligible for more than one prize in any one week.

The result of last week's competition will be announced in our next issue.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 500

Set by G. W. Stonier

We offer the usual prizes for the best opening paragraph for the memoirs of one of the following: Bernard Shaw, Oscar Wilde, Marie Lloyd, Dr. Buchman, Landru, Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Groucho Marx, Dr. Arnold, Joan of Arc, Epstein, Mrs. Beeton. Limit, 200 words.

Report by G. W. Stonier

The difficulty of this competition was to provide a paragraph which would show off in a few lines the author chosen and yet make a possible beginning to a book. Had Dr. Johnson sat down to his memoirs he need only have written, "I was born at Lichfield, in Staffordshire, on the 18th of September, 1709 . . ." and we should have read on avidly. Competitors were without that advantage; they had to seek more spectacular means. On the whole results were respectable rather than exciting, most preferring a bluff Shaw or a Jane Austen ensconced at the window, to livelier fancies. There was a good opening sentence here and there, and perhaps if I had restricted invention to a first sentence, instead of a first paragraph, competitors would have shown themselves a little more dashing. Embedded in John Fay's *Memoirs of Groucho Marx* was an admirable kick-off:

> Actually it was on a steamship, if you must know, that I first saw light of day—and it was light because Mother had just opened the port-hole to knock the ash off her cigar.

That might have deserved a prize if the competition had been one of brevities. The same is true of J. C. B. Date's Shaw: "I dislike writing about myself"—a very likely beginning—and Marion Lockhead's Jane Austen: "Nothing in the world is so necessary as to be born into a genteel family," which is neat if nothing more. But all of these tailed off.

Gerald Hamilton deserves mention for his Marie Lloyd which, unfortunately, is so lifelike that it becomes unprintable halfway through; and "Lew" for a charming bit of erudition at the end of his Mrs. Beeton:

> Although we may lament Dr. Johnson's failure to produce his promised "cookery book on philosophical principles," few will assert that it would have proved as useful and entertaining to the people as that of the subject of this volume.

The prizes go to C. H. Hatten and Mbongo: both admirably terse and in character.

FIRST PRIZE
THE MEMOIRS OF JANE AUSTEN

CHAPTER 1

If birth, marriage and death are the most important parts of a life's story, who could be less equipped than I to write a memoir? For my birth was so devoid of any suspicion of Gargantuan incident as to be entirely uninteresting; no man has yet brought me to the altar to love, honour and obey him; and of death I am precluded, along with the generality of autobiographers, from writing anything save what would be irksome prophecy. Indeed, no one who knew anything of my life would ever have supposed me born to be the heroine of any book save one of my own writing; if, then, I am to have an excuse for publishing my memoirs, it must be my conviction that if I do not tell this story, no one else will. Self-appointed, therefore, and unasked, I take up my tale in the Parsonage of Steventon, in the year 1775.

C. T. HATTEN

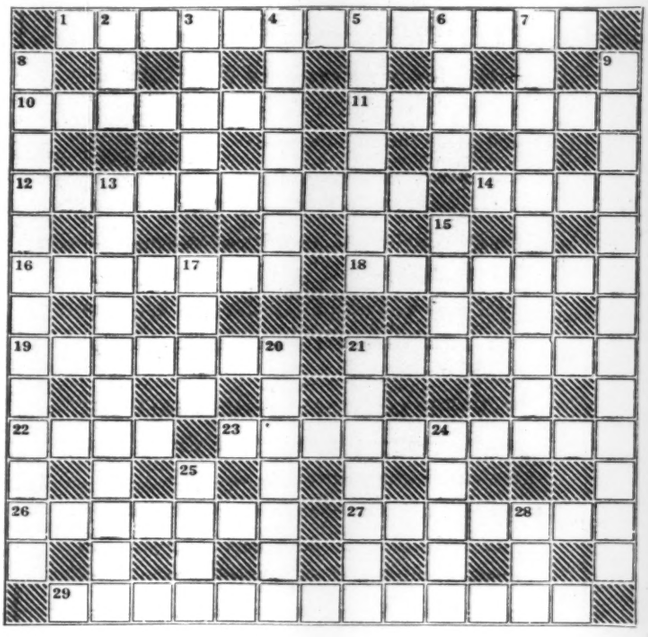
SECOND PRIZE
LANDRU

Moi, je me mets à écrire ces mémoires à cause d'une mémoire défaillante. Après la liquidation de la dix-huitième de mes belles amies, j'ai découvert, avec horreur, que je commençais à éprouver une confusion d'idées touchant les précédentes. Donc, il m'a fallu remédier à cette confusion en constatant définitivement les détails, recueillis de mon journal, de chacun de ces évènements.

MBONGO

WEEK-END CROSSWORD 499

Books to the value of Five Shillings may be chosen by the sender of the first correct solution opened. Post solutions to arrive not later than first delivery Wednesday following the date of issue, addressed to "CROSSWORDS," 10 Great Turnstile, London, W.C.1.



Set by L.-S.

The last week's winner is
F. C. Geary, Corpus Christi College, Oxford

ACROSS

1. Recent subject of Presidential invocation. (13)
10. Limited description of those who spend the shortest time at home. (7)
11. Colour to go to an ant. (7)
12. 2.205 lb. (10)
14. It's wrong to return at this pace. (4)
16. A-void-ance. (7)
18. A treat in disease. (7)
19. The causes of procedure, as it were. (7)
21. Beef sauce? (7)
22. The sort of weather that's quite unfair. (4)
23. It takes a Don to reach this figure. (10)
26. It's nothing to me to get popular applause. (7)
27. Makes a blasted noise. (7)
29. How the customer put his signature to the bill no doubt. (13)

DOWN

2 & 28 Completely mixed drink. (3)
3. It is lashed on as it were. (5)
4. He calculates from the point of view of policy. (7)
5 (rev.) Skin tights, aurally speaking (7).
6. How an American would put a jerk into it. (4)
7. This wheel doesn't go round. (11)
8. Lending library bureau? (13)
9. He just yarns away all day long. (13)
13. "Tipperary" of *The Beggar's Opera*. (11)
15. When this bird goes to the bar it makes a useful prize. (4)
17. The apple of one's eye is contained in her. (4)
20. Not sugar cane, but the other way round. (7)
21. Opportunities that involve risks. (7)
24 (rev.) 2/7 of the Whinlatter Pass (5)
25. Lewis's successor (4)
28. See 2. (3)

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

B	U	B	B	L	E	■	S	T	O	C	K	P	O	T
E	■	O	■	E	■	H	■	R	■	O	■	E	■	U
D	O	W	N	G	R	A	D	E	■	R	U	R	A	L
T	■	L	■	A	■	R	■	E	■	N	■	M	■	S
A	R	I	E	L	■	D	E	S	I	C	C	A	T	E
B	■	N	■	■	■	S	■	■	■	R	■	N	■	■
L	I	G	H	T	S	H	I	P	■	A	B	E	A	M
E	■	A	■	R	■	I	■	A	■	K	■	N	■	E
S	E	N	N	A	■	P	E	R	V	E	R	T	E	D
■	■	A	■	I	■	■	■	T	■	■	■	W	■	A
B	A	L	A	N	C	E	R	S	■	B	R	A	W	L
I	■	Y	■	B	■	L	■	O	■	A	■	V	■	P
H	O	S	E	A	■	F	I	N	A	N	C	I	A	L
A	■	I	■	N	■	I	■	G	■	T	■	N	■	A
R	E	S	I	D	E	N	T	■	H	U	N	G	R	Y

THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By DIVES

BUDGET EFFECTS—SLUMP IN ELECTRICITY SUPPLY—OIL SHARES

ON the day of the Budget the Stock Exchange actually improved in sentiment and prices. The ice on the gilt-edged market even began to thaw a little and a few hardy investors, fondly believing that the Treasury would begin to support the minimum prices, bought a few of the short-dated Government stocks, in particular Conversion 4½ per cent. which rose from 100¾ to 101½. This optimism did not survive the "morning after" the Budget. The Chancellor's warning that loans would have to be raised to the incredible extent of £938 millions (call it £1,000 millions to be on the "safe" side) was sufficient to freeze the gilt-edged market once again. However, the reduction in bank rate from 4% to 3% gave the market some encouragement. It was felt that if short money were made cheaper, buyers would be found for the longer dated stocks, so that the present structure of minimum prices might after all be maintained. This means, of course, borrowing long on a 4% basis, but no doubt the Treasury policy will be to borrow as short as possible—especially if a capital levy is to follow the conclusion of peace.

* * *

A distressing feature of the equity markets since the outbreak of the war has been the slump in electricity supply shares, distressing particularly to the insurance companies which had regarded these shares as a safe field for the investment of institutional funds. Some discerning investors had foreseen trouble for the London electricity supply companies in the event of a thorough-going evacuation of London, but few had expected the provincial electricity shares to be so depressed by the prevailing "black-out." The following table gives prevailing prices as compared with pre-war prices for a few leaders:

	Pre-war	Present	Last Div. %	Div. Yield %
County of London, £1 ..	41/-	29/-	10½	£7 4 9
Metropolitan Electric, £1 ..	44/9	34/6	12	£6 19 0
Midland Counties Electric, £1	37/9	30/6	8	£5 5 0
North Met. Electric, £1 ..	41/6	31/-	10	£6 9 0

Too much importance must not be attached to yields on dividends which can be varied downwards. But it is significant that the preference shares of electricity supply companies, which previously were valued on a 4 per cent. yield basis, are now being offered by jobbers on a 5 per cent. yield basis, for example, County of London 6 per cent. and British Power and Light 6 per cent. preference which are both quoted at 24*s.* ex dividend. Perhaps a more surprising fall has been that in London Associated Electrical Undertakings to around 20*s.* These shares are entitled to a 7 per cent. dividend, which is virtually guaranteed under the London Electricity Acts, and are repaid at par in 1971 (plus reserves accumulated through the consumers' benefit clause) when the undertaking is taken over by the Joint Electricity Authority. Sooner or later the institutional investor, realising that London is not going to be razed to the ground in this war, will pluck up courage to buy shares of this gilt-edged type.

* * *

Oil shares having fallen with the rest of the industrial markets, a word of advice to investors may not be out of place. There can be no better "equity hedge" for wartime investment than that of a company producing crude oil abroad for sale to this country. Oil being an international commodity, its price cannot be controlled by the British Government, and if there is a three-year war the price of crude oil is bound to rise. This particularly favours oil producers in Empire countries, like Trinidad, remote from the theatre of the war, whose source of supplies cannot be interrupted. I particularly favour Trinidad Petroleum Development shares which have risen to 53*s.* 6*d.* cum the dividend (? 12 per cent. or 15 per cent.) to be declared in October. Venezuelan Oil Concessions is also well situated, for although its costs, in sterling, will rise, its sales revenue is in terms of dollars. The sole objection to Anglo-Iranian is that its fields are in Iran, but it is capable of perhaps doubling its production by turning on a few more taps. Political nervousness about Anglo-Iranian will affect Burmah Oil which holds over 3½ million of these shares. Shell Transport has political risks also, but they are well spread and the Company will benefit from the depreciation of sterling. Investors should seize a favourable opportunity of exchanging from Royal Dutch into Shell Transport.

Company Meeting

HARRISONS & CROSFIELD, LTD.

Mr. H. ERIC MILLER'S ADDRESS.

THE Thirty-first Ordinary General Meeting of the company was held on Tuesday last in London. Mr. H. Eric Miller, Chairman, presided and said (in part):—Cash and Government Securities stand at over £860,000. These liquid resources are particularly valuable in the present emergency, and their magnitude indicates that the Board have pursued a policy designed to protect, so far as lay in their power, the extensive interests of the business. The net profit for the year of £345,309 17*s.* 9*d.* shows an improvement of £11,439 on last year's figures. The Board recommend the payment of a final dividend of 15 per cent. on the Deferred Ordinary Stock absorbing £75,000, making the total dividend for the year 20 per cent. Every section of the business contributed to our profits; even the China Company managed to put up a good showing.

Reviewing the tea industry, the Chairman said:—Events have led to the Government requisitioning all Bonded Tea Stocks in the country and until further notice they will take over all teas as they arrive. There can be no question of any shortage of tea, as producing capacity is still much greater than any possible consumptive demand.

REVIEW OF THE RUBBER INDUSTRY

We estimate that total exports from all producing countries during 1939, subject to freight being available, will be in the neighbourhood of 970,000 tons, about 100,000 tons more than during 1938. World absorption of rubber in the first nine months of 1939 is estimated at 790,000 tons, an increase of 130,000 tons over the corresponding period of 1938, nearly the whole of which increase has been taken by the U.S.A. General conditions in the U.S.A. took a turn for the better in the second half of 1938 and their absorption of rubber has been maintained at a satisfactory rate during the past twelve months. It is early days yet to attempt to assess the probable effects of the war upon the rubber industry. Germany, including Austria and Czechoslovakia, imported an average of 110,000 tons per annum in 1937 and 1938, and in the first seven months of 1939 her imports were 62,000 tons. Further supplies are not likely to reach her during the period of hostilities.

The spirit throughout our organisation is of the right character to surmount whatever difficulties and obstacles may have to be faced. We all feel that this is equally true of the peoples of the Empire and of our Allies. The report and accounts were unanimously adopted.

Shortening the odds

Resplendent in a magnificent check suit, a sportive carnation in his button-hole, a face that is red with exertion, a voice that proceeds from a brazen throat, behold the glory of the English race-course—the 'bookie'!

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SALTDEAN, Sussex. Modern Guest House, facing sea and Downs. Walesbeech House. Rottingdean 9431.

18 CHESHAM PLACE, Brighton, 7. Service rooms. H. and c., near sea, meals optional.

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HOLIDAY SUGGESTIONS—continued

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